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THE SPHERE, NOVEMBER 28, 1942
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THE SPHERE

Vol. CLXXI No. 2236 WITH WHICH IS INCORPORATED THE GRAPHIC NOVEMBER 28 1942

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"It's the Scotch!"

Volume CLXXI No. 2236 The SPHERE, London, November 28, 1942

THE SPHERE
With which is incorporated "THE GRAPHIC"
The Empire's Illustrated Weekly

THE END OF AXIS RULE IN ALGERIA AND MOROCCO: THE MEMBERS OF THE ITALIAN ARMISTICE COMMISSION AT ALGIERS leaving their headquarters in the Hotel de l'Angleterre to drive through the streets to internment amidst the jeers of the populace

Since shortly after the fall of France, an Italian-German Armistice Commission has been active in Algeria and Morocco: and their conduct towards the civil population has, on occasion, been questionable. When the Allied landings were made in North Africa, the officers comprising the Commission were all rounded up; the Germans were detained at Fedalla, in Morocco, and the Italians at Algiers, before both were taken off for internment. In Algiers the populace manifested their delight at the arrests in no uncertain fashion. A length of street outside the Hotel de l'Angleterre had been cleared whilst the Italians were loaded on to U.S. Army lorries, but during the subsequent drive through Algiers the inhabitants jeered at the splendidly attired officers, gave a mock Fascist salute, and everywhere gave the "V" sign. This picture was taken as the Italians came down the steps of their headquarters, each (even the highest) carrying his own luggage (*Further pictures on pages 274-5 of this issue*)

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A WAR NEWSLETTER —No. 169

1, NEW OXFORD STREET, W.1.

Darlan.—The use of Darlan's authority as a temporary expedient in French North Africa soon enough proved hateful to all interested parties, and came as a shock to the Allies generally and a douche to the spirit of France *resurgens* inside and outside Metropolitan France. It is moonshine to suggest that in wartime no "compromise with evil" can ever be justified. The history of war bristles with instances, and this war has more than its share to add to the list. We compromised with honour more than once to avoid the calamity of world war and, as the war proceeded, for reasons adjudged sufficient, we compromised and shut our eyes to several unpleasant surrenders of the Galahad ideal. But there are *degrees*, and they are more powerful deterrents to compromise when they qualify an individual's character than when they concern an ideal or morality generally. A few weeks ago Darlan was universally regarded by the Allies as a war criminal, a bitter enemy and a quisling. Nothing he has said or done since Algiers was occupied has altered those verdicts in the eyes of the Allies and Free France, wherever it flourishes. It is clear enough no compromise will ever be entertained with any of Hitler's gang, with any notorious quisling, with any patent war criminal, with any man as dyed in the tar-barrel as Laval. It is yet for Darlan to prove his claim to be removed from those categories.

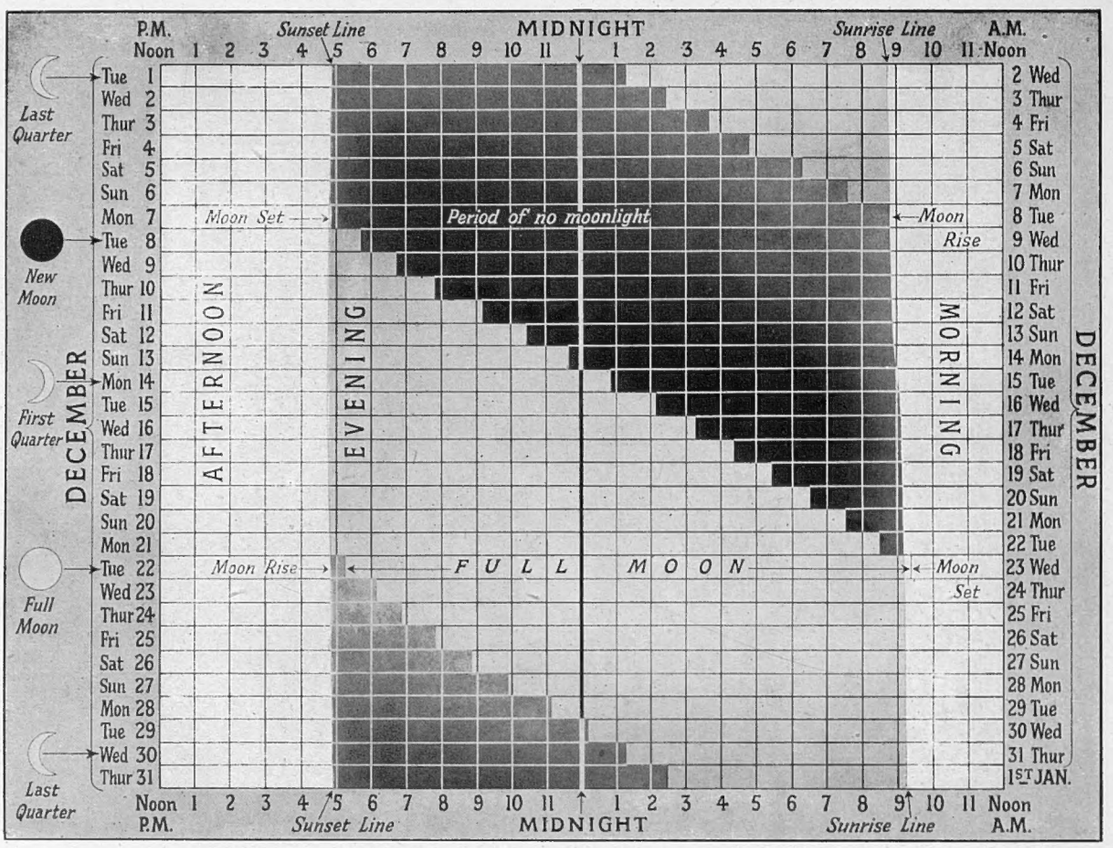
Tunis Boasts.—I truly believe—and it is a heartening belief—that to-day the Axis Powers are left miles behind the Allies in learning the bitter lesson of the danger and the folly of boasting. Both sides have had the sternest proofs of that folly, time and again. The lessons have struck home with incredible slowness. Time in weeks and miles in hundreds still may separate us from that vital Tunis goal, without which we are robbed of much of the value of our superb stroke to make the Mediterranean an Allied highway, and *point d'appui* for an attack on the Axis underbelly in Europe. Difficulties in the way of that objective still bristle for us, and we pitch our prophecies of success, as we should, in a minor key. Not so the Axis. Never were their spokesmen more confident, more boastful, more sure of themselves. They hold the key to the Mediterranean, and do not doubt that they will hold it. Theirs is the vital triangle that makes the Allied east and west occupations of none effect. Yet, if our difficulties in occupying Tunisia and Tripoli are still great, how much greater are the Axis problems of continuing to use or control those vital strategic points! It can only be attempted with the acceptance of the ugly certainty of crippling expense in personnel, in shipping, in planes, transport planes and material, and then only by the diversion of air power and man-power from other vital fronts. The Axis may well put up a determined defence, the issue may be long in doubt, the cost heavy on both sides and the strain terrific, but the most exuberant strategist would agree that the ultimate issue, from the Axis point of view, is at least too little certain to justify halloos and heady boasts at this juncture.

The Immediate Need.—The news on November 17 was so good as to induce an almost petulant annoyance at the presence of a hillock not yet rolled out in North Africa. Tunis, we roundly declared, must not be allowed to interfere with the forward victorious march of the Allies, east, west, north and south. This is to move too swiftly on the wings of hope "Business done" on that auspicious day included the shattering of a great Japanese armada, with crippling losses in capital and other warships and transports; the abandonment of the latest enterprise in the Solomons, and an encirclement of the Japanese remnants pressed back into Buna in New Guinea. It revealed the Afrika Korps strung out and still in desperate flight on the desert tracks, and the sea road on both sides of the Tripolitanian border, and the R.A.F., from ever-advanced landing-grounds, continuing the work of transport destruction. It revealed the First Army steadily marching into Tunisia, and in touch with the Axis forces there, already harassed by certain units of the French forces in that country. It revealed a tremendous wastage (at no unreasonably heavy price on the Allied side) of Axis submarines and transport planes plying in the Western Mediterranean; and it gave clear evidence of considerable relief on the Russian front through the withdrawal of troops, as well as air squadrons, resulting in a temporary lull, clearly in the Russians' favour. *But* Tunis remains outside the bag; the Germans have no inconsiderable force there, and are hourly increasing it, at a heavy price, from Sardinia and Sicily. Hitler regards Tunis as a key-point in his last effective triangle of attack in a Mediterranean otherwise almost restored as an Allied *Mare Nostrum*; and (in a word) we are asked to be patient, and whistle for a favourable wind, which will blow the enemy out of Tunis, and clear a channel for our shipping from Gibraltar to Alexandria and the East. It is not unreasonable. Rome was not built in a day. *Our* Rome, though long since planned, had hardly a stone to show in position on November 1. There are snags a-plenty ahead before doubting Remus gives over vaulting the low parapet walls. The news of progress is unbelievably good, almost too good; almost inviting a shrewd kick in the pants. Let us stiffen our muscles to receive what counterstrokes Fate or Hitler may devise, by resisting the luxury of sprawling too largely over the map.

Someone Who Blunders.—General Smuts has told the world that he considers Hitler a prime blunderer Amateur strategists are dangerous to their own side only when they are in a position to put their theories into practice. Those who regard all statesmen as amateurs in strategy must now admit that all Amateur Strategists with power are not always dangerous to their own sides. Mr. Churchill and Mr. Roosevelt have recently given good evidence of that. Still, without losing sight of our own blunders in the past, we may quite usefully assess and ventilate Hitler's. And that is what other writers or speakers, besides our great Smuts, are beginning to do. The American military writer, Major Fielding Eliot, has tabled five major blunders by Hitler. The first, Britain. Hitler's failure to strike at the heart of surviving resistance when, after the fall of France in June 1940, it lay open and feebly beating. The second, Britain again. August to October 1940. If Hitler had been a greater man, he would, despite his fearful air losses, have continued the blitz for a few weeks more and achieved that valuable, temporary immobilisation of Britain which it had almost achieved when broken off. The third, the Balkans. By permitting himself to be diverted to the Balkans in the spring of 1941, obsessed with the idea of uniting all Europe in a crusade against Bolshevism, he threw away six weeks of good fighting weather which might well have settled the fate of Russia. In this, says Major Eliot, he was completely out-generalled by Churchill, who foresaw the attack designed on Russia and took every risk and sacrifice to lure Hitler on to this vital delay. The fourth, Russia. Hitler's obsession with the need for securing himself against a Russian attack (by eliminating Russia) was, Major Eliot argues, misconceived and exaggerated. If Russia had meant to attack Germany, she threw away a golden chance in the spring of 1940, when a descent of thirty divisions from the north-eastern slopes of the Carpathians into the plains of Hungary must have smashed the armies of Germany in Rumania, Greece and Bulgaria, and given Russia a flying start. The fifth blunder, Moscow November 1941. In that month, the Germans had clearly shot their bolt in the attempt to storm Moscow Hitler renewed the assaults, with fearful consequences. So much for Major Eliot. To-day he might consider the addition of two more great blunders, for such they seem likely to prove The continued assaults on Stalingrad from motives of personal pride, and the occupation of Vichy France or, alternatively, the failure to foresee the Allied moves in North Africa which directly led, as a panic measure, to that occupation, the results of which are still imponderable.

The Doctor's Dilemma.—"One in every five of the homes of Britain has been, structurally, more or less damaged by bombs." That is a fact, a statistical fact, which has emerged from the most carefully-kept records, a fact uncontrovertible. The public in Britain was probably surprised by it. For indeed it is an eye-opener. I am concerned here to speculate on Dr. Goebbels' decision concerning it. The *Luftwaffe* badly needs a boost. Here is a splendid testimony to the devastating effect of all the power and glory of the *Luftwaffe*, when it has occasion to give England a turn. Then tell it with loud-speakers throughout the Reich. True, but there is another consideration. The Führer at this moment is playing the role of "the good-natured man." The humane man, whose heart bleeds at the suffering of his people under the brutal assault of the ruthless British, a man who loathes bombing from the air, would never employ it except as a reprisal, and never did so except after humane warnings and strictly in conformity with humane conventions. It is not (the Doctor admits) the Master's most convincing role. He is playing it to an apathetic house If the German public is made aware that they have already destroyed or partially destroyed the homes of 20 per cent. of the British nation, it can hardly accept the view that our present air attacks on the Reich cities are pure, unjustified child-murder The statistics lend at least some colour to the justification of reprisal When Britain had lost one house in five from Nazi bombing, the Reich had not lost one house in twenty from British bombing Nor has it yet. On the whole, better *not* publish

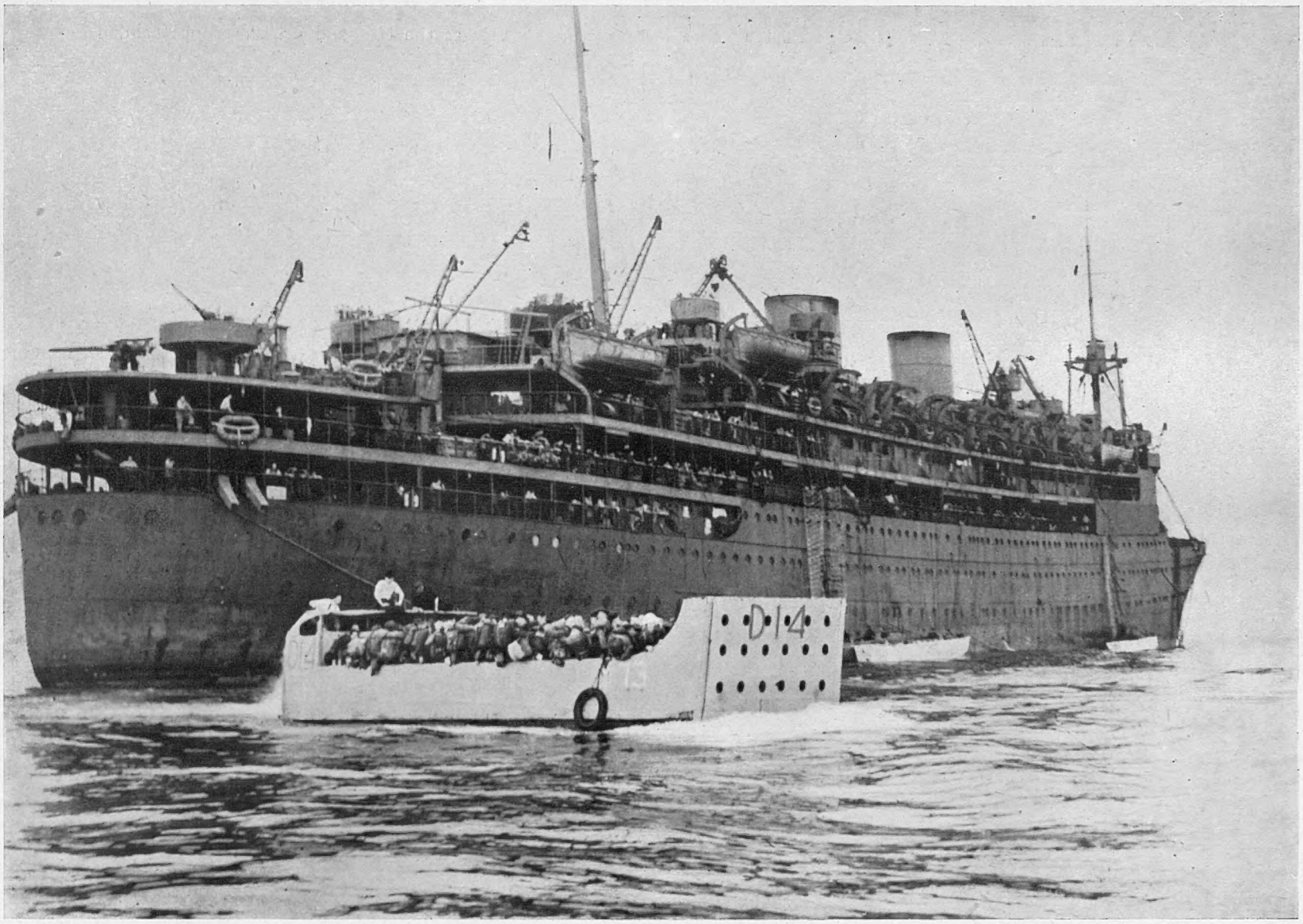
THE OLD STAGER



A MOONLIT CHRISTMAS: "THE SPHERE" MOONLIGHT CHART FOR DECEMBER

On the first night of the month the last quarter of the waning moon is visible with the nights darkening more and more till the night of the 8th, when there is total darkness till sunrise. On the 14th the new moon reaches its first-quarter stage. The night of the 22nd brings the moon to its full, when it will be visible throughout the whole period of darkness The last-quarter stage falls on the night of the 30th

A limited number of these charts will be supplied free of charge on application to the Publisher, "The Sphere," Commonwealth House, 1, New Oxford Street, W.C.1, but 2½d. in stamps must be enclosed with the application



THE BIGGEST SEA-BORNE EXPEDITION IN HISTORY

The Landing of the U.S. and British Forces in North Africa

A Series of Official Photographs Showing How the Troops Were Put Ashore, and How They Immediately Occupied Their Strategic Objectives

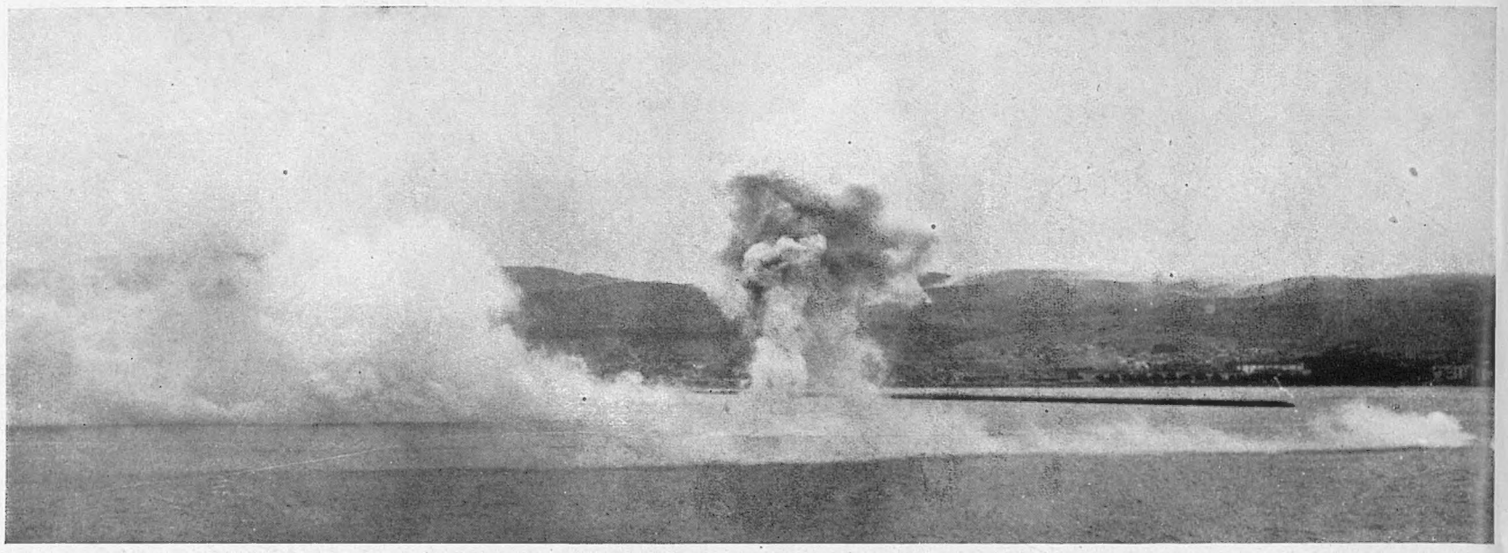
(See *also following pages*)

ALGIERS : A landing craft, heavily loaded with fighting men, puts off from one of the 500 transports which took part in the operation and heads for the shore

On this and the following pages we publish a series of official pictures taken during the U.S. and British landings on the North African coast. As our readers know, this was the largest sea-borne expedition in history—some 500 transports taking part, covered by 350 naval vessels. The landings were made simultaneously at many places on the Mediterranean and Atlantic coasts, and were everywhere successful. The Royal Navy played a major role under the command of Admiral Sir Andrew Cunningham, whilst the land forces were under the orders of Lieut.-General Dwight D. Eisenhower

ORAN : AMERICAN TROOPS LAND AT ARZEU BAY, 25 MILES TO THE EAST OF ORAN. It will be observed that the transports came quite close inshore at this spot. Thousands of troops with full weapons and hand luggage were unloaded from A.L.C.s, and bulldozers and tanks were also brought ashore. From Arzeu a column was soon formed up to advance by road towards the port of Oran

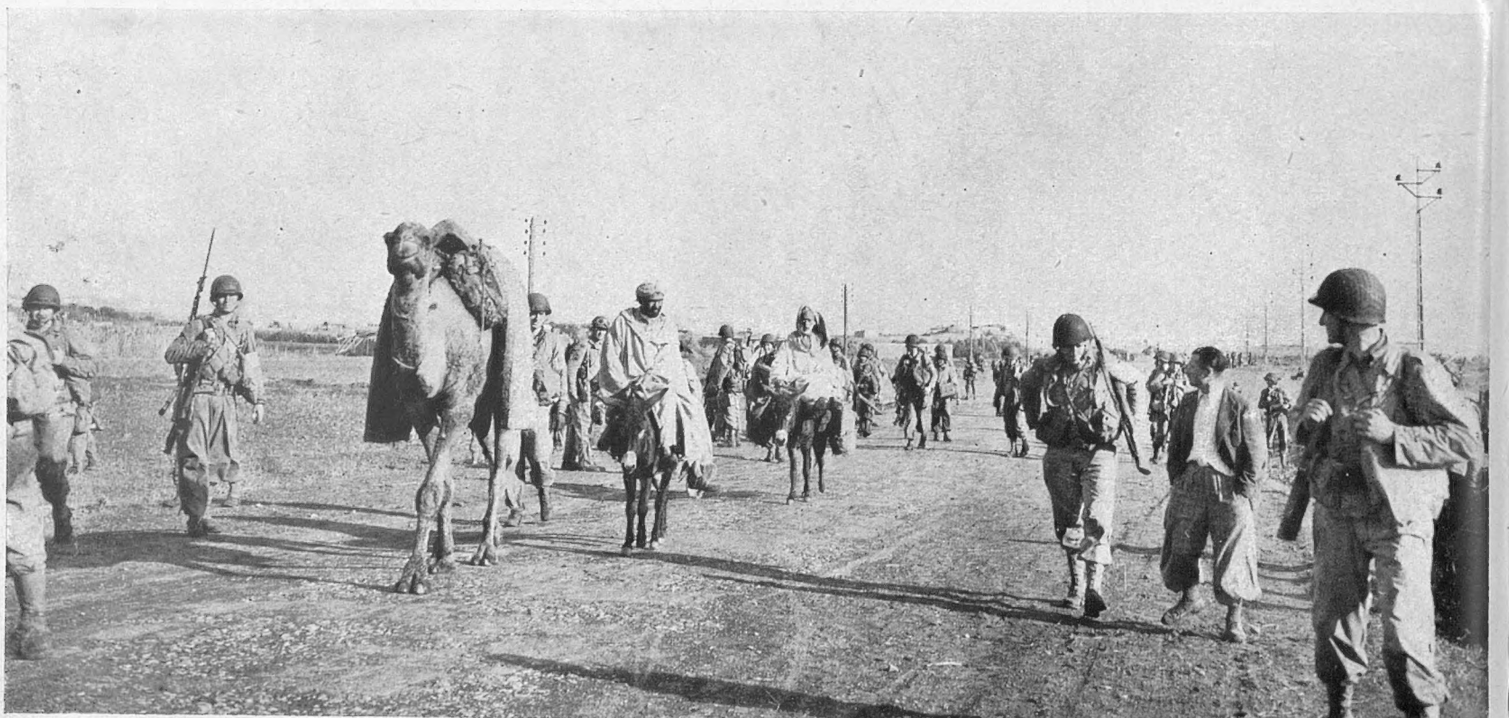
THE LANDINGS IN NORTH AFRICA: Scenes as the U.S. and British Troops Landed



A SMOKE-SCREEN BEING LAID BY BRITISH WARSHIPS TO COVER THE LANDINGS AT ARZEU BAY, NEAR ORAN: This spot lies some 20 miles to the east of Oran. French ships were captured here by the Royal Navy, one of them a merchantman laden with soldiers. A later landing was completely unopposed by the French: it gave the U.S. troops control of the small and smelly, but vital, port of Arzeu. While U.S. troops were fighting all round Oran, this tiny port was witnessing the unloading of a vast convoy bringing supplies, vehicles, ammunition and water

THE U.S. TROOPS COME ASHORE: The big transports came in quite close in places, and the rest of the journey to the beach was done in A.L.C. craft. Naval "beachmasters," who set lights to guide incoming craft, worked for twenty-four hours without relief—and, most of the time, without food

BRITISH TROOPS LANDING STORES AND SUPPLIES in the surf near Algiers: German dive-bombers attacked transports at this place, but the city nevertheless quickly capitulated. According to a broadcast from Berlin, Marines landed here were the first British troops to arrive in Algeria

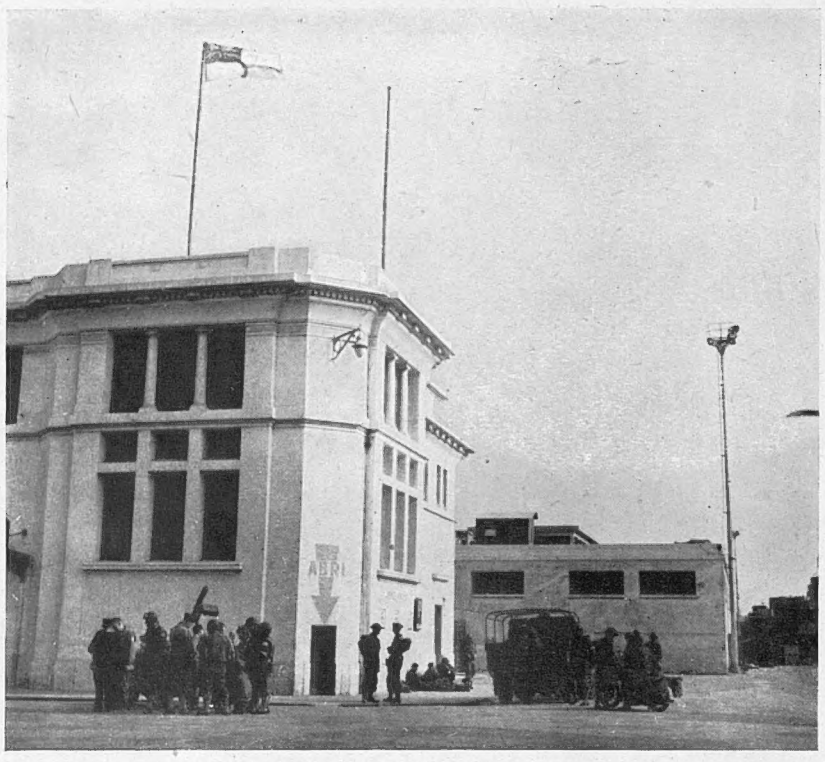


AFTER THE LANDING AT FEDALLA, ON THE ATLANTIC COAST OF MOROCCO: U.S. soldiers, with Arab mule and camel transport, advance on the city of Casablanca. Strong opposition was encountered by the Americans here, and Vichy reports declared that there had been considerable fighting. It was also stated that three columns coming from the Fedalla landing-point had advanced on the city with tanks. After the resistance of the Vichy naval vessels in Casablanca Harbour had been overcome, the "Cease fire" was sounded at the end of many hours of fighting

GUNS BEING MAN-HANDLED OFF THE BEACH BY AMERICAN TROOPS AFTER THEY HAD BEEN UNLOADED FROM LANDING CRAFT. There were 500 merchantmen to transport the U.S. and British forces to North Africa: not only did they convey troops, but also supplies and equipment; and some of the latter was of the most up-to-date nature. General Eisenhower has announced that a new mortar has already proved itself in action. Big guns and anti-aircraft weapons were also landed, to say nothing of the lorries, armoured cars and other implements which a modern army requires

A SUNKEN MERCHANTMAN IN CASABLANCA HARBOUR AFTER THE CAPITULATION. As a result of the opposition of the French Navy, Rear-Admiral Henry K. Hewitt (who was in charge of the Naval forces on the Atlantic coast of Africa, and who was promoted shortly afterwards by President Roosevelt) threw in the full weight of the U.S. Battle Fleet, including dive-bombers. Landings were made in the vicinity, and soon Casablanca was being attacked from land as well as from sea: its capitulation to Major-General George S. Patton, of the U.S. Army, soon followed

THE OCCUPATION OF STRATEGIC POINTS



THE WHITE ENSIGN AT ALGIERS: Flying from the top of the dock offices in the port. British and U.S. troops are both in evidence.

AMERICAN TROOPS REST ON THE DOCK-SIDE AT ALGIERS after disembarkation: After the collapse of French resistance, more troops were poured into North Africa, from Casablanca to Algiers, and the great eastwards advance—towards Bizerta and Tunis—was begun

U.S. TROOPS SETTING UP THEIR RADIO COMMUNICATIONS in the "bush" after their successful landings at Fedalla, on the Atlantic coast

THE AMERICANS TAKE OVER AT ORAN: These two U.S. soldiers (one from Alabama and the other from Wisconsin) are manning a heavy, automatic, anti-aircraft gun which was installed on a roof-top in the Algerian town soon after its capture

BICYCLES BEING UNLOADED FROM AN AIRCRAFT on the captured aerodrome at Maison Blanche, near Algiers

R.A.F. PERSONNEL WERE THE FIRST BRITISH TROOPS TO LAND in North Africa. Here they are unpacking ammunition ready for use by our fighter aircraft in further operations against the Axis

A QUICK MEAL FOR BRITISH PILOTS ON THE CAPTURED AERODROME AT MAISON BLANCHE: R.A.F. fighters gave cover to the Allied shipping at Algiers, where landings were made to effect a bridgehead in preparation for the assault on the airfield a few miles away. When U.S. forces captured it, R.A.F. fighters landed and were soon in action, driving off Axis aircraft attacking our ships

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THE FRUITS OF VICTORY—AS THE TROOPS SEE IT. Cleaning up captured booty in the Mersa Matruh area, where bales of stores were abandoned as Rommel's Afrika Korps and the Italians fled to the westwards—*Drawing by Edward Osmond*

When our troops arrived at Mersa Matruh, a rich haul of stores and equipment was made. Just outside the "box" fortifications eastwards of the wrecked town is a gigantic dump which was found to be absolutely intact, all dispersed in exemplary fashion and camouflaged. Anyone wanting a clean shirt only needed to choose one from the bales of Italian equipment left by the wayside. "It is like greeting an old friend to see familiar tins of bully or fruit in abandoned enemy vehicles," wrote a war correspondent who was able to view the scene. "The vehicles themselves are, not infrequently, captured British trucks, which are again being put into service by us." In fact, a good deal of the material which was captured by the enemy from our large dumps at Tobruk, Capuzzo and elsewhere during our retreat in June is now back in our own hands again!

directed by an officer standing on the turret they can, and have, shot up, hit and destroyed enemy tanks before 'they knew what had hit 'em.'"

Five days after the battle had opened, a single squadron of Shermans, manœuvring near the Miteiriya ridge, destroyed 16 German tanks in less than half an hour, without receiving a single shot in return.

This was, indeed, irresistible warfare. From a great distance, the Shermans could destroy their armoured adversaries; near at hand they were belching, spitting killers with as much steel and lead leaving them in a few seconds as some tanks could fire in long minutes. Men could not exist near the monsters: those lethal, heavy machine-guns took care of that. Aircraft swooping foolishly were met with the fire of a first-class anti-aircraft gun—a weapon which could alternatively dispose of armoured cars, trucks or crippled tanks in a single, sanguinary flash.

So much for the Shermans. What of our own big tanks, which probably came up behind as proper infantry tanks, and were given the task of dealing with any tanks that the Shermans had missed, also smashing any fixed positions and remaining "hedgehogs"?

As a heavy infantry tank—its great weight is still an official secret—the Churchill has been described as possibly the most formidable fighting instrument possessed by any army in the world. So far it has not been stated that this particular type has participated in the Egypt fighting, although two were sent out for experimental purposes (according to Mr. Churchill) some time ago. It is heavily armoured,

(Continued on the following page)

ROMMEL IN FULL RETREAT IN EGYPT: THE BATTERING OF THE FLEEING AXIS COLUMNS AT HELLFIRE GORGE. The two converging roads from the low piled up, are indicated in the drawing: the Sollum cliff-road is the more easterly of the two routes (seen on the extreme right). Both roads were littered with to the general expectation, no stand was made by the Axis at this naturally strong point

From the desert plains of Egypt up to the more hilly Cyrenaican plain, the route is by way of the Sollum road or the now-famous Hellfire Gorge: here it was expected that General Rommel would turn and give battle to his pursuers; instead, the retreat became even more precipitate than before! The Sollum road is cut out of the side of the cliff; the other runs through the Gorge itself. They link up on top of the plateau and lead on to much-battered Fort Capuzzo. The R.A.F. pursued the retreating Axis columns without respite: so effective was their

(*Continued from preceding page*)

giving the maximum of protection to the crew, but, in spite of its weight, is able to move over any kind of ground—save waterlogged surfaces—at a reasonable speed, perhaps as fast as the Sherman. Terrific gun-power is concentrated in a minimum of space, and it is unlikely that many enemy machines exist which could stand up for long to its devastating fire.

At first the Churchill was armed chiefly with a 2-pounder gun, the theory being that it could carry more shells and maintain a higher rate of fire with such a weapon. Experience has convinced the pundits that a mistake had been made, and many of our Churchills are now armed with the new 6-pounders, weapons with remarkable qualities of armour penetration and a high, semi-automatic rate of fire.

If for any reason Churchills should be brought to a standstill in the midst of close tank and infantry fighting, it is probable that the thickness of their armour would enable them to be used as small fortresses or strong-points.

It cannot be denied, however, that these tanks are not made for rapid pursuits, but primarily for close engagements or defensive fighting. They may have been designed originally for the protection of England in the event of invasion, or for the initial, hard stages of landings on the Continent. Those who have been privileged to take a seat at the control-lever of one of these machines, have invariably been astonished at the ease with which the tank could be manœuvred.

The Germans have throughout enjoyed the advantage in this war of one or two standardised types of all-purpose tanks, designed like pocket-battleships of the land, to combine speed, fire-power and a reasonable amount of armoured protection. In close combat with Shermans and the modern types, these were beaten, but the few that escaped were enabled by their superior speed to outstrip all pursuers save the lighter British and American tanks, such as the M-3 light cruisers, as well as armoured cars.

But such machines, unless in great numbers, would be unable to do more than harry the formidable German remnants, unless, like land destroyers, they could use some form of shell with similar qualities to a torpedo, and hold the broken Panzers at bay till the second line of Grants and perhaps Covenanters came lumbering up.

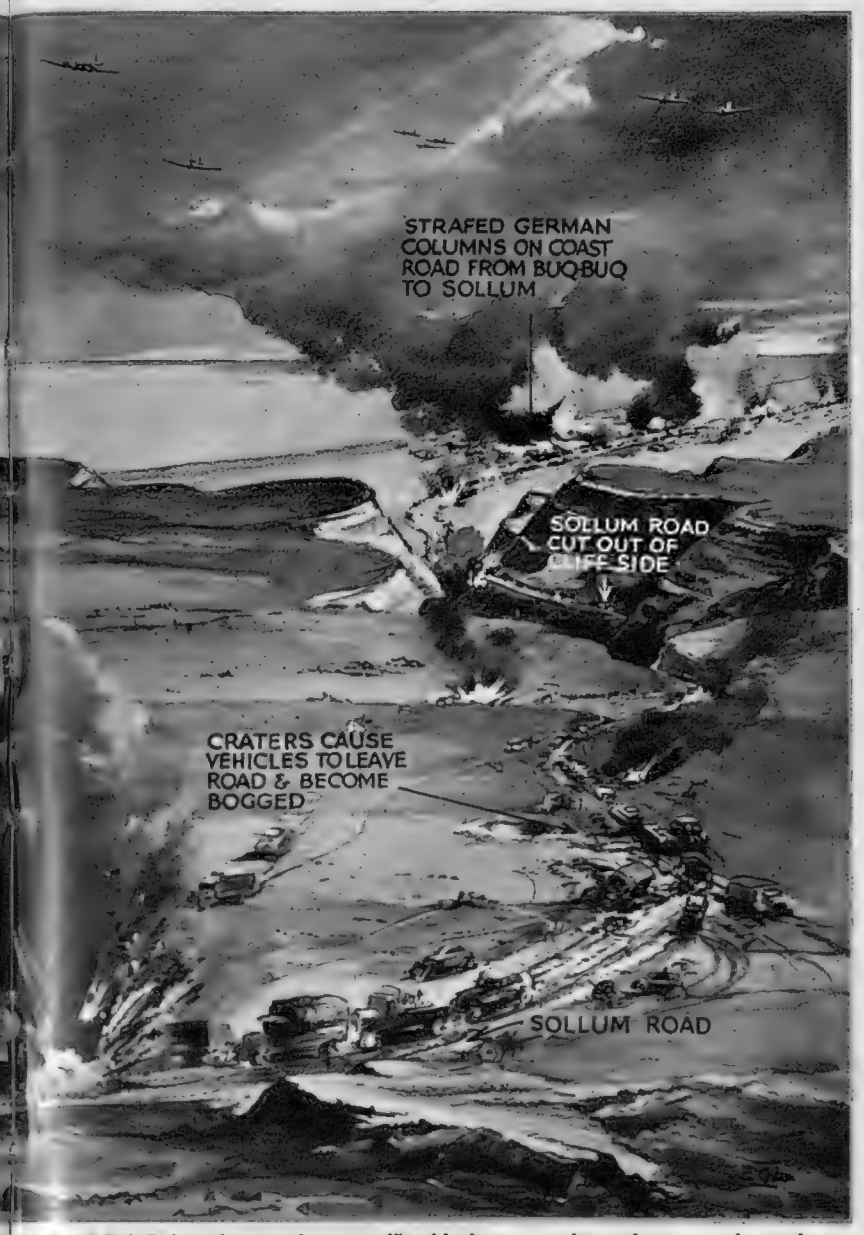
A British tank that has not yet been reported in Africa, but that would have been able to keep up with the Germans and possibly fight them to a standstill, is the new Covenanter Mark V. It weighs 15 tons, but has been reported capable of 30 miles an hour, and if a 6-pounder could be substituted for its 2-pounder main armament (besides two Besa machine-guns), the Covenanter would be ideally suited for fast pursuit work.

Generally speaking, it can be seen from our latest, successful operations that we have been concentrating in the last two years on the production of heavy tanks with great fire-power. Thanks to that specialisation, we were able to defeat Rommel's main armour in Egypt. The same tanks, and others, will enable us, we hope, to smash eventually the German defences of Europe, after aerial and land artillery have blasted the necessary paths.

But it is also to be hoped that we have, "up our sleeves," a considerable number of tanks that combine a similar fire-power with great speed, so that when the Germans fall back, we shall be able to catch them and destroy the main Panzer divisions before they reach the prepared inner defences of Europe. That would ensure the quick, "clean" end to the war which we all desire.

A BRITISH TANK IN THE DESERT, narrowly missed by a heavy enemy bomb, comes through the smoke and dust unscathed. As a rule, only a direct hit is effective against a tank—so strongly armoured are these modern fighting vehicles

THE RETREAT OF ROMMEL



level at Buk-Buk, where a huge traffic block occurred as the retreating columns broken vehicles when the pursuing British columns reached the spot. Contrary —*Drawing by E. G. Lambert*

bombardment from the air that transport vehicles were wrecked all along the Sollum road, causing the others to leave the road and become bogged at places. Heavy rains had caused severe flooding to add to the Axis confusion

Drawing by E. Byatt

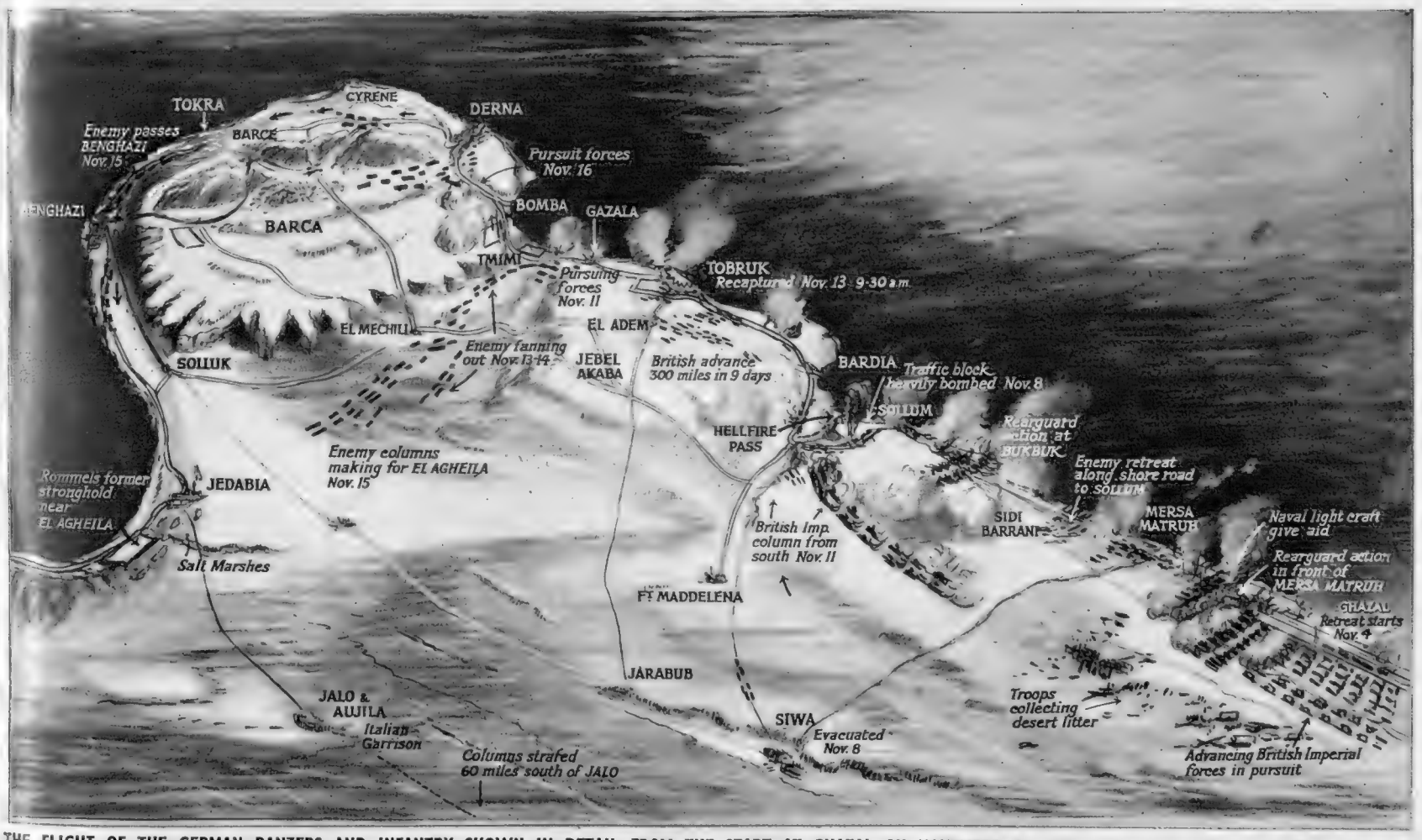
ROUNDING UP THE ABANDONED ITALIANS AFTER THE "BATTLE OF EGYPT": The Prime Minister has already given a figure of 75,000 for the prisoners captured in Egypt; but it is obvious to all that this will later be increased when all the wandering Italians and Germans are rounded up in the desert. The Italians, in particular, have been in sad case: abandoned by their German "allies" and denuded of their essential transport, many have been found by the Eighth Army famished and—literally—at the last gasp. British planes and relief parties have gone out in search of them, and numbers have been rescued in this way

Below—The flight of the German forces at El Alamein may be said to have begun on November 4 at Ghazal. From that point—to the east of Mersa Matruh—the retreat of the enemy became more evident and complete. Dumps of material were fired by the Germans and Italians during the rearward movement to Mersa Matruh: here a definite rearguard action occurred, but of short duration. British naval light craft caused the enemy trouble on his seaward flank and the retreat continued through Sidi Barrani.

Four fairly orderly columns were observed at this time, providing a big target for R.A.F. bombers. A last rearguard action took place in front of Buk-Buk, evidently to ease the passage of the German Panzer forces and lorries up the two roads leading from the shore plain to the higher ground of Capuzzo and Tobruk. In spite of this action a huge traffic jam occurred on the lower ground beneath the Sollum cliff-road and the entrance to the Hellfire Pass.

Both these ways up to the Capuzzo road became choked and disorganised under Allied attack from the air and also from brake failures. It was observed later that vehicles were spaced out in more orderly fashion, as a failing car had caused serious damage to closely following lorries. Subsequently, the roads here were found to be littered with disabled vehicles of all kinds.

The enemy pressed on over the rising ground, mainly by way of El Adem, by-passing Tobruk, which was recaptured by the pursuing British forces at 9.30 a.m. on November 13. (The British advance had accomplished 300 miles in nine days) After passing Gazala, the enemy was observed to be fanning-out his forces, some passing up on to the high Barce plateau towards Cyrene and Barce (by-passing Derna), and so on towards Benghazi



THE FLIGHT OF THE GERMAN PANZERS AND INFANTRY SHOWN IN DETAIL FROM THE START AT GHAZAL ON NOVEMBER 4. The retreat was by way of Mersa Matruh and through Hellfire Gorge. Only two genuine rearguard actions were fought during the whole of this retreat—*Drawing by Percy Home.* (See notes above)

MEDITERRANEAN STRATEGICS

A Series of Special Maps and Diagrams in Illustration of the New Situations Created in N. Africa, France and Italy

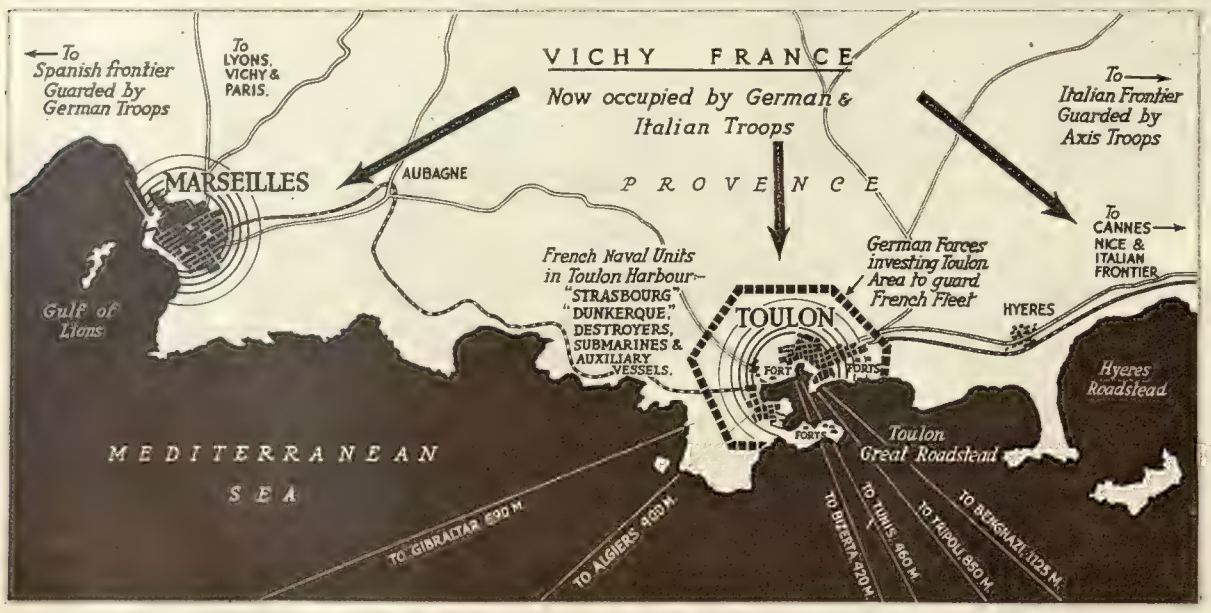
Up till three weeks ago, Sunday, November 8, North Africa and Southern France had experienced no fighting, the only warfare taking place upon the sea when British convoys to Malta were attacked by Italy's naval and air force. Suddenly the scene changed with the landing of American troops.

So complete was the initial success of the Allies—the safe arrival of the great armada, some 350 warships of all kinds, convoying the heavily-laden transport vessels, numbering about 500 in all; the speed of the landings; the prompt timing of the R.A.F., appearing at the accurate moment to take over airfields, just occupied by U.S. troops that within four days of the appearance of the formidable Allied power, the "Cease fire" order was given from Algiers to operate all over Algeria and Morocco.

In the meantime, Hitler had been active: a conference had been called at Munich on November 9, to which Ciano, representing Mussolini, and Laval had been called. On the

THE VITAL AREA IN THE CENTRAL MEDITERRANEAN: The control of the Sicilian Channel rests in the hands of whoever possesses control of the airfields of North Africa

By the middle of November, the first indications of the trend of Allied strategy in the Mediterranean were becoming apparent. To the east, the British Eighth Army was advancing from Egypt: the enemy had by-passed Benghazi and was making due south towards Agheila and the Gulf of Sirte. This applied both to the main northerly column using the big engineered highways and to the desert routes south of the Cyrenaican plateau: all the enemy columns, light and heavy, appeared to be converging on a point somewhere near the Tripolitania frontier. Rommel's old strong-point at El Agheila would naturally be alluring as a recuperating spot for his shattered Korps, but climatic conditions in November are not the same there as in January, although superficially they bear some resemblance. From the great Italian triumphal arch at the frontier, there stretches the bare coast road to Tripoli for some 500 miles. The country backing this highway was, and is, still very largely a howling wilderness. Sirte and Homs break the monotonous sweep of this coast roadway. From El Agheila to the fighting area in Western Tunis the distance would be about a thousand miles. The greater part of this route is exposed not only to wind and weather, but to attack from the air and from the sea, when occasion serves. The desert areas to the south greatly extend the military hazards. Some long-established trade routes cross this great tract to Fezzan, which contains some important modernised oases, of which Murzuk is an outstanding example



GERMANS AT MARSEILLES; AND THE FRENCH BASE OF TOULON "INVESTED" TO GUARD THE FRENCH FLEET

Marseilles has been the port of entry for a great volume of goods from the North African colonies: it is now in full occupation by the Germans. But at Toulon, where a part of the French Fleet is anchored, the situation was of greater delicacy: needing the French warships, the Germans were nevertheless uncertain of how the occupation of the great naval base would react to their disadvantage. Therefore, whilst "investing" Toulon from all sides, the Nazis refrained from actually entering. How long this tolerance on their part will continue remains to be seen. The town is reported as being "out of bounds" to all non-residents, and leave to enter is very difficult to obtain. The commander of the French naval forces is reported to have taken the oath of allegiance to Marshal Pétain

THE MEDITERRANEAN CUT IN HALF—From Tunis up to the Gulf of Genoa: This is the most vital area of all. Through the Sardinian Channel all east to west traffic must flow: so that whoever occupies the North African coast holds the strategic advantage. The total coast-line of Sardinia is 862 miles in length: that of Corsica, 300 miles. The Axis have thus quite a considerable task effectively to patrol these two huge islands. From Bizerta to the Italian base at Cagliari is a distance of 130 miles: from Bizerta to Tripoli by sea is 400 miles

morning of November 11, the frontier line of Vichy France was crossed by German troops pressing southwards through Lyons towards Marseilles and south-westward to Toulouse. Toulon, where the French Navy was assembled, was not entered by the Germans, the French Fleet having given a pledge to resist all aggression. Two Panzer divisions and German infantry in lorries rolled along the French roads, passing through villages and towns, where the Vichy police were called out to prevent any awkward demonstrations.

Italy was at last allowed to achieve some of her long-coveted ambitions, the entry into Savoy and Nice, but they did it without undue ostentation, fearing the rising of the French people, to whom the sight of the Italian Army in France brings vividly before them their humiliation and helplessness. Corsica was occupied by Italian troops—so the cry of the Italian people for "Nice, Corsica and Tunis" seems momentarily achieved, though not quite in the glorious manner anticipated.

Tunis is in grave danger, due, so Italy considers, to Hitler's refusal to allow Italy to occupy Tunisia in 1940, after the fall of France. With the Eighth Army pursuing Rommel's retreating force, and the U.S. troops pressing into Tunis from the west, the Axis is alarmed about the safety of Bizerta, the great naval port and air base. Under the Armistice terms the fortifications were demilitarised, but it is not known if these have been re-established.

A few months ago Italy was complaining of the "deplorable behaviour of the French" in Tunisia, who were showing too much sympathy for the British, giving a tremendous welcome to the survivors of a ship sunk during a naval battle. Though there is a large colony of Italians, they are anti-Fascist, and appear to have little enthusiasm for an Axis victory. As for the Arabs, they have too keen a memory of Italian treatment of their fellow-Muslims in Libya to respond to any Italian propaganda. President Roosevelt asked permission from the Bey of Tunis for U.S. troops to pass through his territory for the purpose of eliminating the forces of evil from North Africa, but was obliged to proceed with his military plans before any reply was received.

A state of emergency has been proclaimed in Southern Italy and in Sicily, where naval and air forces have assembled. For the first time the country feels itself in danger of something more serious than an occasional air raid. The people have been warned that the United Nations mean to open the gate of Europe through Italy, and they have good reason to feel alarmed. Not many of the eleven divisions will return from Libya; there are possibly ten divisions in Russia, and it is said that no fewer than thirty divisions have been required to maintain their hold upon their new territory in the Balkans. Help will certainly be required from Germany when the Allies are able to attack Italy in force

ITALY: ITS LONG AND VULNERABLE COASTLINE, shown in relation to its great mountain backbone and to the ring of mountainous country which guards the large and fertile Lombardy Plain

The Italian coastline is no less than 2,600 miles in extent: the island of Sicily has a coastline of 700 miles to protect; Sardinia has 860 miles; and Corsica (where the Italians have landed, to meet considerable local opposition) 300 miles. The great industrial centres of modern Italy are in the north—in the Lombardy Plain, surrounded by the Alps and Apennines, and with Genoa, Spezia and Savona as the principal ports. Despite its encircling ring of mountains, however, this important part of Italy has been vulnerable to British bombing aircraft: with the opening up of new Allied bases in North Africa, it is not unlikely that Italy will become even more vulnerable to air attack in the very near future

WHERE THE ITALIANS HAVE LANDED IN CORSICA: The quayside at Ajaccio, the capital of the French island which gave birth to Napoleon. It has been a French possession since 1768

On left—**BY ARMISTICE DAY—NOVEMBER 11—THE WHOLE OF FRANCE WAS OCCUPIED BY THE NAZIS.** Within a few hours of the landings by the Allies on the North African coast, the Germans had occupied the whole of France, with the sole exception of Toulon. From the north and from the west enemy columns rushed forward, in pursuance of what was obviously a pre-arranged plan for the occupation. As a crowning humiliation, Italian forces at the same time advanced from the border to occupy the Eastern Provinces. Nazi rule over the whole of France is now complete: the Vichy Government is no longer a free body, nor are Frenchmen any longer under the control of their own countrymen

A GREAT ARMY, AFRICA-BOUND: THE SEA, AS FAR AS THE HORIZON, IS COVERED WITH BRITISH NAVAL VESSELS AND MERCHANT SHIPS bound for the coast of French North Africa, with a cargo of armed men and machines of war. This historic picture was made from a Coastal Command aircraft during the passage. The R.A.F. and the U.S. Army Air Force maintained a great protecting air "umbrella" over the Convoy, whilst flying-boats and bombers maintained a constant patrol, pinning the U-boats in their Biscay bases, and other aircraft neutralised the efforts of German long-range fighters to interfere

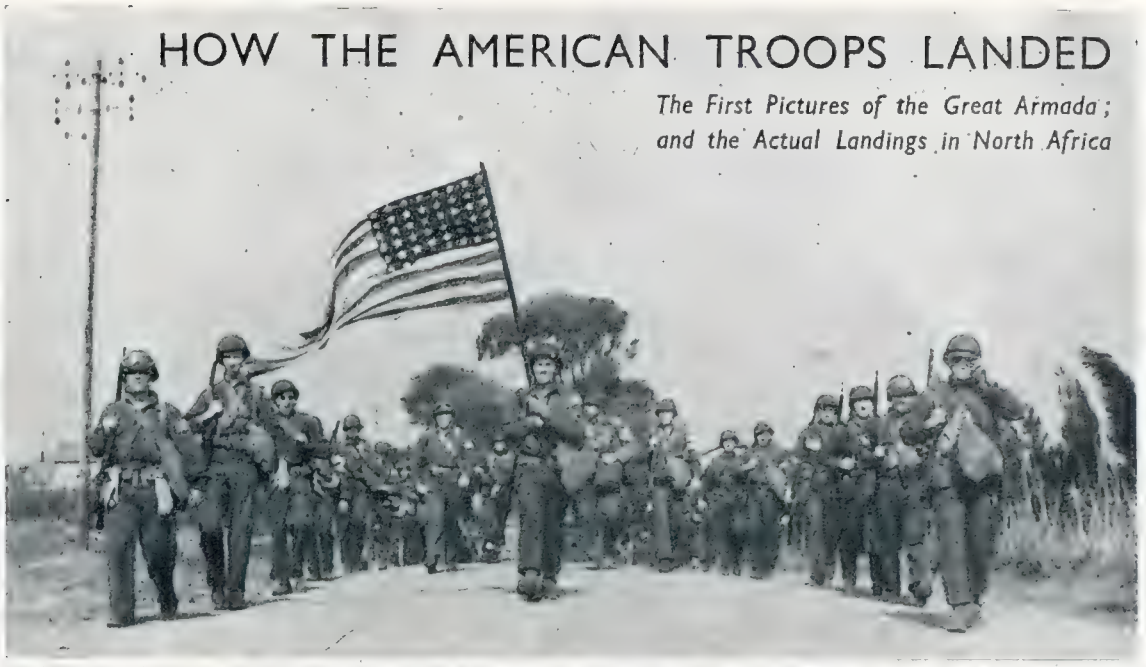
Night and day without respite, from the day the first convoy left port, an unending stream of flying-boats and long-range, land-based aircraft patrolled the Bay of Biscay, neutralising the Axis U-boat threat before it could develop. Probably not one of the aircraft was seen by the men on the troopships. The airmen were tackling the threat at its source—harrying and attacking the U-boats as they left the French Atlantic ports. And far to the west the ships sailed safely on. This great aircraft "umbrella" was laid on by the R.A.F., assisted by the United States Army Air Corps. So complete was the secrecy surrounding the operation that not even commanders of the squadrons providing the protection against the U-boats knew what was afoot.

It was the same with the crews. They flew the long, tiring patrols over the bay without sighting the ships. But they saw several U-boats, and some good attacks were recorded. After the ships left Gibraltar the U-boats converged, and in just over an hour Coastal Command Hudsons had attacked three of them. Later that day two more U-boats were attacked within ten minutes.

***On left*—AS THE ENEMY OFF NORTH AFRICA ATTEMPTED TO HINDER THE LANDINGS: The guns of the Fleet in action against enemy aircraft: tracer shells are here seen tearing into the early-morning sky, the light from them silhouetting the vessels against the sea**

HOW THE AMERICAN TROOPS LANDED

The First Pictures of the Great Armada; and the Actual Landings in North Africa



HEADED BY "OLD GLORY," THESE AMERICAN TROOPS SET OFF FOR THE VITAL MAISON BLANCHE AERODROME soon after landing from the Great Armada. This essential point was soon in their possession, and shortly afterwards Allied aircraft were using it for further operations against other places farther afield

A SCENE AT SURCOUF (NEAR ALGIERS) AS AMERICAN TROOPS LANDED AND IMMEDIATELY SET OFF INLAND. Note the flag they had brought with them to head the advance: note also the small landing-boats drawn up in the surf on the right and the larger craft, for equipment, behind

AMERICAN TROOPS LAND ON THE BEACH AT FEDALLA, BETWEEN RABAT AND CASABLANCA, on the Atlantic coast of French Morocco. The men are bringing up supplies, setting up radio communications and otherwise carrying out their predetermined task. Note the sandy nature of the beach on which the men were landed, with the waters of the Atlantic on the right hand of the view

THE FIGHTING IN NORTH AFRICA

The Capture of Algiers by United States Forces, and the Landing of Airborne Troops After a 1,500-mile Journey from Britain

HOW THE AMERICAN TROOP-CARRIERS CARRYING BRITISH SOLDIERS ARRIVED NEAR ORAN AFTER A 1,500-MILE JOURNEY FROM ENGLAND—*Drawing by Roland Davies*

It was at Oran that a severe opposition to the landings was put up by Vichy warships and land batteries. The airborne troops which were landed near the port came from England, flying down to North Africa off the Portuguese coast in U.S. troop-carrying aircraft. The view above is taken from Mers-el-Kebir, looking towards the hill which separates that naval harbour from the city of Oran. Santa Cruz Fortress is on the summit of the headland to the right

MEN OF THE R.A.F. REGIMENT MARCHING INLAND after landing in North Africa: These British troops assisted in the occupation of the vital aerodromes, from which R.A.F. pilots were soon operating. It is interesting to note the full battle equipment

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FRENCH POLICE IN ALGIERS PUSHING BACK THE CROWD DURING A DEMONSTRATION HOSTILE TO THE ITALIANS: The Algerians cheered the Allies, jeered at the prisoners, and everywhere gave the "V" sign. At some points in the city the crowds were very thick

HOW THE FORMER ARROGANT ITALIANS WERE DRIVEN OFF TO INTERNMENT in lorries belonging to the U.S. Army

AMERICAN SOLDIERS HELPING TO PRESERVE ORDER IN THE STREETS. Each bears a replica of the American flag on his sleeve

THERE WERE ABOUT 200 ITALIANS, with considerable luggage, hauled out of the Hotel de l'Angleterre for internment

OFFICERS AND CIVILIANS ALIKE WERE DRIVEN OFF, mostly in open lorries. Most of them appeared to be glad to be leaving the war!

THE ARCTIC ROUTE TO RUSSIA

Cold and Ice which Clog Guns and Sheathe the Decks are the Bugbears of the Polar Lane to Murmansk

By FRANK ILLINGWORTH

ONCE again Nature supports the enemy in Arctic waters linking British and Russian ports. The all-too-short transient period between the months-long Arctic summer day, which played into the hands of Nazi marine and aerial raiders, has given place to the long northern winter night. Certainly ships bound for Arctic Russian bases benefit from the natural "black-out," inasmuch as it renders enemy reconnaissance and bombing more difficult. But, on the other hand, U-boats and mines find valuable cover at this time of year; and in addition to Axis-sponsored hazards, fog-banks, born in contrasting sea temperatures, storms accompanied by heavy snow, and ice formations accompany winter cold. And Allied seamen carrying crates of war materials bearing the stencilled words "Archangel via Murmansk," and the Coastal Command airmen guarding them, welcome the weather conditions no less than Axis activities.

What in popular parlance is known as the "Polar Lane to Murmansk" lies between Spitzbergen and the North Cape, with rugged, mist-draped Bear Island a midway rocky knoll. Roughly 400 miles long, it is formed by an arm of the warm-watered Gulf Stream. This strikes eastwards between Europe's Arctic shores—which it keeps ice-free for the Nazis' benefit—and the southern fringe of the Polar Ice Pack, becoming ever narrower as Arctic currents lessen the Gulf Stream's authority until it dies in eastern sea-ice.

Along this troubled wedge of water Allied convoys sail. From the north, ice formations press the ships southwards towards strongly-served Nazi naval air bases studding a coastline I know to be suited to the construction of aerodromes and boasting several natural harbours useful to light naval craft.

The "uneasy" period commences as convoys round Norway's humped shoulder. To the south lies Trondheim, Narvik, Tromso, with their Axis naval complements. Nearer at hand are the once-peaceful little Norse port, Hammerfest (its fish-oil factory which brought wealth to pre-war wooden homes destroyed by Royal Navy guns), Kirkness, Vardo and Finland's only northern port, Petsamo, with their naval bases and tundra aerodromes.

From them, Axis raiders add their weight to the unpleasant meteorological conditions faced by Allied seamen bound for Murmansk during winter.

Allied airmen, too, are operating in the Arctic—among them Coastal Command crews. Our aircraft made non-stop flights from Britain to Arctic Russia, where operational bases were hastily built. And though they have not featured in any spectacular battles, their value to seamen fighting the Hun and the weather has been considerable. Most of the route to Murmansk is beyond the range of shore-based aircraft: but reconnaissance by Coastal Command long-range machines helps Russia-bound convoys, and bombing attacks born in successful reconnaissance have undoubtedly seen U-boat packs broken up, and the activities of enemy surface raiders reduced.

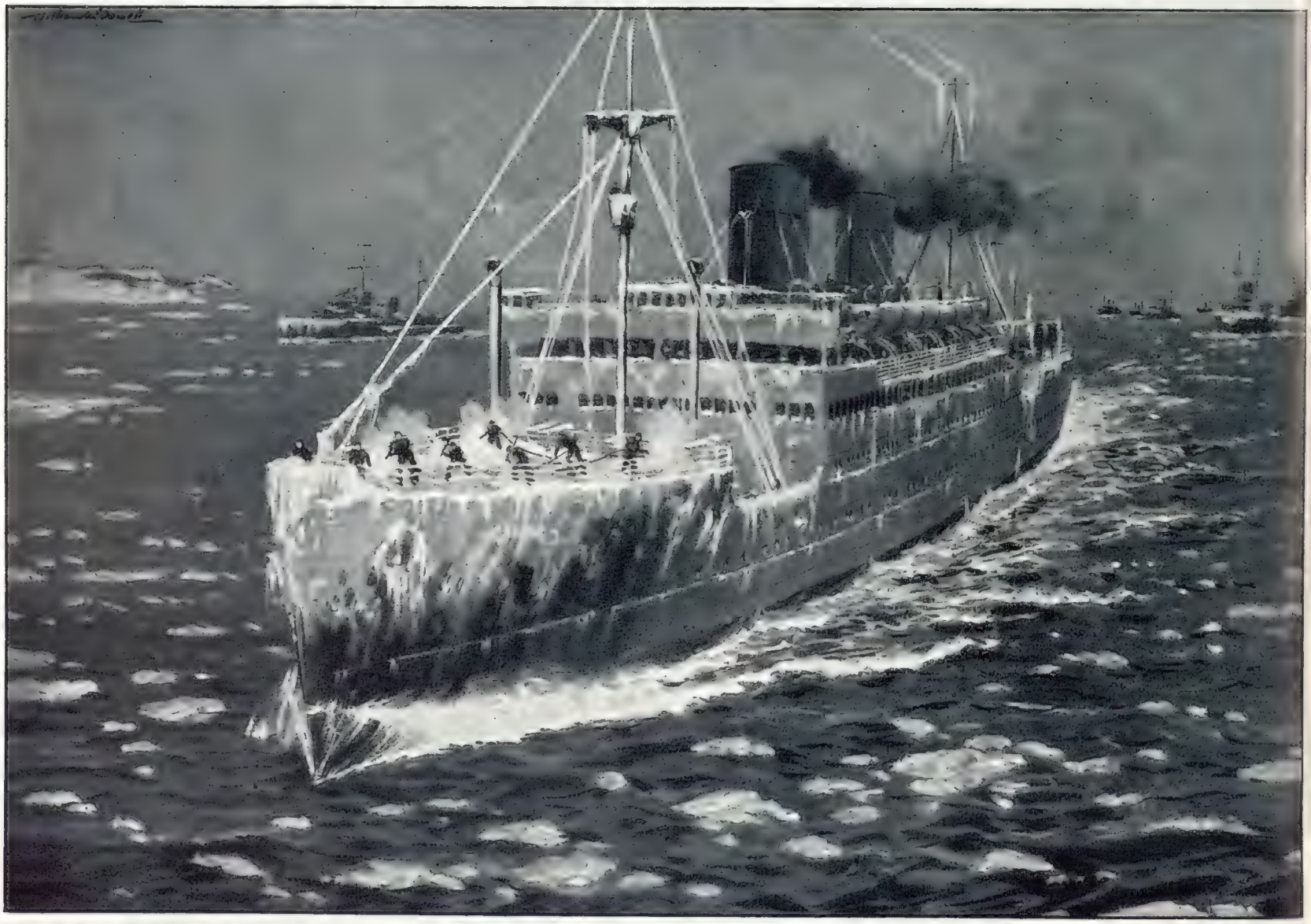
A U.S. NAVY PILOT EQUIPPED FOR WORK OVER THE NORTH ATLANTIC: Preparing for an anti-submarine patrol on the convoy routes and making a note of the data available to the R.A.F., with whom the U.S. airmen are co-operating

Summer's midnight sun saw Coastal Command aircraft constantly active over 500,000 square miles of Arctic waters. The weather seldom supported their work. Day-and-night sunshine is most trying; lack of darkness necessitated constant alertness: and between the wall-like fog-banks rolling across the sea, broken hills and valleys appeared, producing mirage effects which saw pilots plot non-existent shores! And to-day Coastal Command shares with the Royal Navy and Merchant Service Arctic winter darkness and cold.

Cold is the bugbear of northern winters. Murmansk-bound ships carry extra rations of warmth-giving foods: cod-liver oil, lard, bacon, treacle, sugar, butter—which some seamen, emulating the Lapps, dollop in their sweet tea.

The cold strikes deep.

Icing conditions arrive suddenly. Fog coats Coastal Command wings with ice; carburetters react unfavourably to the cold. Spray flops on to ships' decks in the form of ice granules, adds its quota of white weight to frozen fog. Ships have become so ice-armoured under



THE WEATHER CONDITIONS ON THE ROUTE TO RUSSIA: A merchantman in convoy after a heavy blizzard—the ship is literally sheathed with ice, particularly on the bows where the seas shipped in bad weather have frozen on the forecastle and rendered the anchor gear unworkable. In the drawing, a working party is seen thawing-out the accumulated ice with steam jets before clearing it away with pick and shovel. The funnels, being warm, are the only places on the ship where snow and ice do not remain—*Drawing by Wm. McDowell*

THE R.A.F. COASTAL COMMAND ARE HELPING TO PROTECT THE RUSSIAN CONVOYS: The long-range aircraft which are constantly spotting and attacking U-boats, and also keeping the Arctic ice-edge under constant observation—*Drawing by W. G. Whitaker*

Coastal Command aircraft which are operating on convoy-protection duty in areas out of reach of shore-based fighter protection are of the utmost value in air reconnaissance and long-range escort; they are also of great value in spotting and attacking U-boats. They provide the convoy with the fullest information about the movement of enemy forces. Should enemy surface ships try to intercept the convoy, the R.A.F. "strike" aircraft can attack them. Much of the flying which these big aeroplanes are now carrying out is north of the Arctic Circle, usually in weather conditions which test the skill and experience of the crews to the utmost. Fog is the great enemy; and, at this time of the year, ice is another. The ice-edge is kept under constant observation too: on the position of this depends the routeing of the convoys. In the picture above, the vessel in the foreground is an escort destroyer of the famous Tribal class; to the right is one of the small corvettes which have proved such a great success in this war on escort duties. Above the merchantmen of the convoy are (on the left) a Sunderland flying-boat; and, on the right, a U.S.-built Catalina—both aircraft with a tremendous range

severe conditions flanking the Polar ice-edge that they have accepted risks consequent upon dropping out of convoy so that all hands might turn to with picks and shovels.

At first steam hoses were used to clear decks of their white armour. But to quote a master: "Steam melts ice all right. But the water formed frequently freezes before reaching scuppers." The working parts of guns are kept ice-free electrically. But only picks and shovels clear gun mountings and platforms, decks, scuppers, etc., effectively.

Ice-pans scrape by. They can't always be seen: only heard caressing the ship's flanks. And sometimes these northern waters play Allied ships a curvy trick. Fog, bred in the everlasting clash between the Gulf Stream and Polar drifts, and "the blizzard," frequently blot out the strange glow cast by scintillating aurora borealis flames and peculiarly brilliant stars and moon. Ice formations press round a ship. An "ice bowl" hems her about as though purposefully supporting the Axis' cause.

Convoys give the enemy-occupied coast a wide berth. But in hugging the Polar ice-edge ships take the risk of running into "leads" which may cause them to become icebound. But since Coastal Command arrived on Arctic shores, the danger of falling victim to ice has been reduced by aerial reconnaissance of the ice-edge, on the position of which the route to Murmansk is planned.

Sea-ice increases as ships plough eastwards towards the extremity of the Gulf Stream's authority. Murmansk is described as an "ice-free port." Nevertheless, Soviet ice-breakers may meet convoys as much as 20 miles from Kola Bay, by which Murmansk is reached.

U-boat, destroyer, E-boat and bomber attacks punctuate the long trips to Murmansk. Mines dot the narrow wedge of water, and convoys are assaulted time and again. And though seamen have been rescued from the sea, from Carley floats and lifeboats—thanks largely to Coastal Command reconnaissance—cramp comes quickly to men floundering in the water, and the Arctic's ice-panned ocean is no place to be adrift in an open boat. Murmansk's surgeons have removed many a limb following frostbite.

The return journey sees convoys run the Nazi gauntlet again. For the enemy is no less persistent (and little less popular among British seamen) than the cold, fog, blizzard and ice common to winter passages along the "Polar Lane to Murmansk."

WHAT ARCTIC CONDITIONS MEAN FOR THE SEAMAN: Two pictures taken on board a British warship during a wintry spell whilst on patrol on the convoy routes in northern waters. Snow and ice are piled high up on deck and superstructure as the ship carries out her duties

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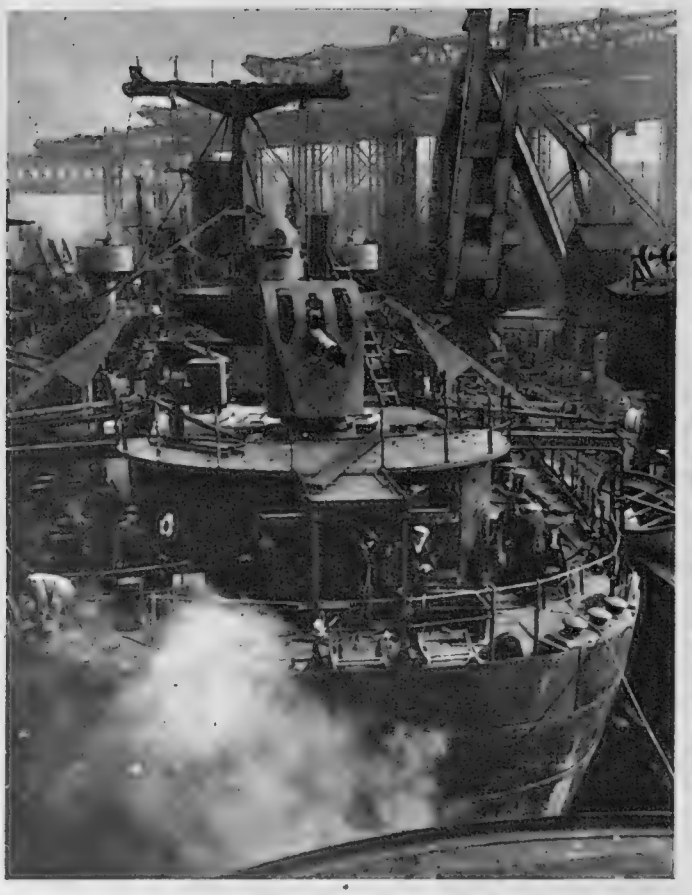
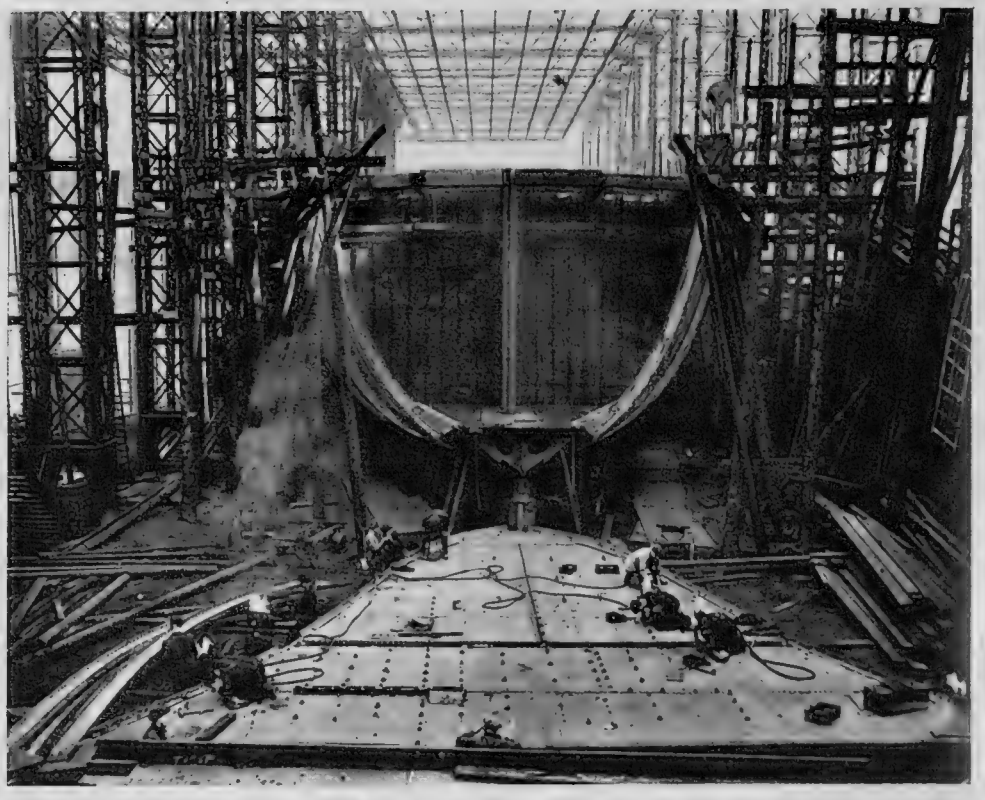


A MERCHANTMAN (complete with stern gun) is almost ready for sea. In this northern shipyard the target is sixteen ships of 7,000 tons each for this year. So far fourteen have left the stocks



A NEW SHIP BEGINS TO TAKE SHAPE ON THE STOCKS: Workmen are seen riveting a bulkhead before it is fixed into position. In this yard one new merchantman is completed every three weeks throughout the year

WORKMEN USE A HYDRAULIC RIVETER to assemble the fore-end plate of a new ship. The English system is to build up the vessel piece by piece, unlike the methods of welding and pre-fabrication followed in the U.S.

A BUSY CORNER OF A BRITISH SHIPYARD where ships are being built side by side at great speed. In all this "orderly confusion" every worker knows his job and gets on with it with efficiency

THE REGIONAL CONTROLLERS AND THE MAN-POWER MACHINES *(The Second of Three Articles on the Work of the Ministry of Labour)*

By CHARLES GRAVES

THE actual implementing of the man-power policy of the Ministry of Labour (as described in THE SPHERE last week) is carried out by the Regional Controllers and their staffs. There are eleven Regional Controllers in Great Britain, corresponding almost exactly with the regions designated earlier in the war for preparation against air attack and invasion. The only difference is that the London region is linked with the south-eastern region into one unit, the south-eastern region consisting of Kent, Sussex and Surrey.

The job of the Regional Controllers is to look after the man-power machine, control the staffing of the man-power offices and employment exchanges, inspect their organisation and working and ensure, through the system of labour-supply inspectors, that proper use is made of man-power by visiting factories, studying dilution of labour, woman labour and unskilled labour generally—and then up-grading when desirable or necessary.

The Regional Controller in London has a deputy and five assistant Regional Controllers, and there is a daily "plateful" for each of them. One is responsible for skilled labour, up-grading and training; another is responsible for part-time labour, woman labour, unskilled labour, labour clearance, welfare and the concentration of industry; the third is responsible for staffing and inspection of local offices, public relations and juvenile labour; the fourth is responsible for call-up to the Services, deferment cases and general appeals, together with the legal side of the Essential Works Order; the fifth is responsible for industrial relations, labour disputes, trade boards and wages inspection.

Let us take the job of the second assistant Regional Controller. The background is that the stock of woman labour to-day is drawn from those who registered under the Registration for Employment Order and National Service Act, and he has to make the best use of them. Unfortunately, many of them are unusable for various reasons, and it is natural that the higher the age group, the fewer women are available for war work—because of marriage, health and domestic responsibilities generally.

Under the National Service Act the younger women can opt for the Forces or industry. Those who opt for industry are used for war work in the areas where there is the greatest demand for labour, and I was shown a most interesting map of London marked off and coloured according to the local labour situation. Scarlet stands for the areas where labour is most difficult to obtain. Next comes red, followed by amber to green.

Owing to black-out, transport difficulties and domestic commitments, many women who could do part-time work in their immediate neighbourhood are unable to go from, say, Tooting to Hayes. There are two solutions. Either the immobile women must displace the mobile women in their neighbourhood, releasing the mobile women for places farther afield, or factories must be brought bodily to the areas where labour supply is abundant. This mountain-to-Mahomet plan is already being carried out in various places.

Both schemes — displacing mobile women with immobile women and bringing factories to "green" areas—are made

MRS. PEGGY MARTIN, shipyard worker, carries a plate which marks where the rivets have to go

A STEEL PLATE BEING HOISTED READY TO BE MOVED INTO POSITION: Keels for new ships are laid here practically whilst the old ship is sliding down the shipways for launching, so that not a minute is lost

A FUNNEL IS LOWERED INTO POSITION: The ship itself is riveted, unlike those pre-fabricated and welded vessels built by Mr. Kaiser in the U.S., which have attracted so much attention recently

compulsory by the certain knowledge that the stock of woman labour is dwindling. This is in spite of the already existing practice of moving women engaged in non-essential work to vital war work. Volunteers for part-time work are urgently needed in many areas. The definition of part-time is quite elastic and the practice means as much time as the individual is able to give from her other duties.

We now come to the problem of unskilled labour. The Regional Inspectors, visiting factories, discover whether the man-power is correctly used, and, where possible, comb out men for heavier work and replace them by women. How do the Regional Controllers know where vacancies for labour exist? The answer is very simple. The employer gets in touch with the local employment exchanges. If local labour is exhausted, the information is passed to the Regional Controller, who arranges for orders to be circulated to the other employment offices in the region, and, if necessary, to the other regional offices throughout the country.

Before, however, the employer's request for extra labour is circulated, the inspectors visit the employer and his factory to see whether the number required is not more than is really necessary.

One of the chief demands of London labour is for building operatives, mostly for the erection of aerodromes, airfields, camps, hospitals and hutments for the American Expeditionary Force. Last April Mr. Ernest Bevin told both the employers and representatives of the trade unions concerned that there would be this heavy commitment, and both sides agreed to help him to the utmost. Already, many thousand building operatives have been directed from London to the various parts of eastern, southern and south-western England.

Another point is that most of these building operatives are of military age—up to forty-one—and their deferment has been extended until this programme is completed. Now there is to be a further comb-out up to the age of fifty.

Welfare is a very necessary part of regional control. Workers have to be met on railway stations and provided with accommodation where necessary. At the Royal Veterinary College alone about 500 people are put up every week. For part of this building is now a reception hostel.

In my previous article I referred to the nurseries and feeding-centres and billets. The Welfare Department also concerns itself with the shopping difficulties for married women. It arranges for time off to be taken, and other amenities such as the tying-up of parcels by shopkeepers and the delivery of the goods at night. It seems extraordinary that no priority is given to factory women on their essential shopping during the brief time they are allowed out to make their essential purchases. I am assured, however, that public opinion will not stand for any priorities in queues.

The Welfare Department also arranges for entertainments in the factories, and for the visits and pep talks of Commando officers, Royal Air Force pilots and other members of the armed forces who can give first-hand accounts to the workers of the actual use to which they put the weapons made at the individual factory that they are visiting. I myself happened to be at a B.S.A. factory where a Commando captain who had been at Vaagso told the workers during the luncheon hour about his experiences. The effect was electric. This is arranged through the Ministry of Information.

To conclude: many women are doing voluntary work for, say, the American Red Cross and other charitable organisations, but they do not escape the Ministry of Labour net merely on those grounds. The heads of these various organisations are approached for correct information as to the hours done per week of these unpaid workers. My own personal feeling is that the W.V.S. have done such wonderful work, and are continuing to do so, that it would be a great pity to deplete their ranks.

Next week I will deal with employment exchanges and the question of deferment.

MISS LOUISE LINES (from Yorkshire: formerly a cotton machinist) painting the deck of a merchant ship

WOMEN WORKERS PAINTING THE HATCH COVERS of a nearly completed merchant ship. Women are employed in great numbers in most British shipyards to-day, carrying out tasks which, formerly, were considered hard even for men

SHIPS AND MORE SHIPS: A newly-launched ship, without ceremony, and without even a name, is towed into the fitting-out basin past other ships already in the hands of the fitting-out squads

AWAY FROM THESE WARS. . . .

Memories and Thoughts of the Years Between

—A Fortnightly Causerie **By J. G.**

MODERN BIOGRAPHY.—No doubt there were faults in the "three-decker" biography of the Victorian notable. It could be dull and prosy, and pay far too much attention to career, and far too little to character and home associations. In the case of statesmen, readers were often fobbed off with a one-sided political tract; in the case of literary men, they were often presented with what they already possessed on their shelves, from which they could make a better selection for themselves.

On the wave of reaction from the "dry-as-dust," the modern biographer turns for his models to the novel or the stage, or the consulting-room, and, like all healthy reactions, it has gone too far and made itself sick again by lack of moderation. Myself, I hope the even mean may be stabilised in my time. I can conceive of no duller biography than Lord Newton's *Lansdowne*—to go back no further to the Victorian tradition (which had receded so far from the model of Southey).

And, in the modern manner, after due reflection, and in dispassionate appraisement, I can name no more over-dramatised and sometimes misleading biographies of famous men than Daphne du Maurier's *Gerald* or Ellis Roberts's *H. R. L. Sheppard*.

Nobody can wave aside the interest these studies evoke. There is little to be said against the literary craftsmanship which made them. It is in the interests of truth and in the best interests of humanity that criticism is chiefly justified. "The thoughts of men are not try-able" even by their most intimate companions. Literary criticism being what it is to-day, the easy superlative is less trouble than the careful judgment, and a chorus from many voices, kept going, can sell a worthless pill or establish the authority of a misleading biography.

The biographies of du Maurier and Dick Sheppard are the very reverse of "worthless pills"—because they are "popular" pills, containing very sound ingredients, the presence of any deleterious drug in the recipes is the more dangerous. Mr. Roberts's chorus makes a number of claims which Time has already challenged. They claim him to have been one of Dick Sheppard's most intimate friends; claim that none of those friends could have done the work better; that all those friends must value and reread his study; that none of the millions who admired Dick Sheppard realised the inward sorrows hidden by his all-friendly smile. It is not Mr. Roberts's fault that all these large claims were made, at least directly. All of them are, in fact, controversial, and some of them very much disputed.

Dick Sheppard.—Every soul who ever came in contact with Sheppard for any length of time was aware of the turmoil and tragedy of a human soul behind the brave and ready smile, and guessed, too, how vitally important it was for his sake, for courage's sake, for the sake of peace and sanity, to keep the curtain up, and to maintain silence. Who shall assess the happiness or tragedy of his fellow, who dares to say that this man is happy, that man wretched?

Dick Sheppard and Gerald du Maurier were both actors, both prone to dramatisation and self-dramatisation. Both were *bored* by success, impatient of obstruction and of all forms of opposition based on principles of safety-first, go slow or respect for tradition and vested interests. Both had to the full the frailties usually to be found in genius and in highly-strung natures.

Dick Sheppard was a saint, a primitive Christian, one to whom the love of Christ was *all*; total love given and to be passed on every day, in every way; the spirit of religion before which the letter of organised religion was mere junk, to be scrapped wherever it might interrupt the flow of spirit. He was one of the greatest *demagogues* of religion, showmen of Christianity, apostles and missionaries of the Christian faith. He employed for his supremely noble ends the arts and crafts of the actor, advertising agent, showman. Sydney Holland used the same means for *his* noble ends. He, too, was a born actor and showman, but he was level-headed and calm, and did not dramatise himself. Neither did he spend himself with the grand, mad recklessness of Dick Sheppard, though he, too, worked himself to death for his causes.

What might not Dick Sheppard have accomplished if he had enjoyed Sydney Holland's health, balance, restraint and nervous stability? He achieved miracles, moved mountains. It is still too early to reach a clear appraisement of the part played by his very frailties in achieving those results.

The Trusteeship of Biography.—The only point I would make is a generalisation on the art and scope and trusteeship of biography: it owes to society and to humanity still a duty of reticence. The Victorian cupboards may have been dusty and stuffy, but they had their uses. Mankind still has skeletons to hide, secrets which lonely souls (and every soul is lonely) must lock away. And the legend still has force which declares: "Cursed be he who moves these bones."

"The soul and the body are two, not one." Who so bold, so wise, so foolish, so impertinent, as to assess the happiness or misery of a fellow creature? Who can estimate the consolation of soul that triumphs over the miseries of a broken body, or dismiss the tragedy and torture of mind of one who passes among his friends for a favourite of the gods? The function of biography is to tell the truth so far as it is *proven* and can be known, and perhaps "all the truth that is fit to print." But much that nowadays is printed as truth is mere guess work—and that is not fit to print. And if we wish to keep human life sane, hopeful, courageous, we must admit the limitations of human vision and understanding and respect the duty of reticence even in an "intimate" biographical study.

I am quite certain that if Dick Sheppard could read Mr. Roberts's biographical study of him, he would be at pains to acknowledge that his own casual confessions to Mr. Roberts concerning his childhood had given a partial picture and a wrong impression, and would in honour contradict a number of "statements of fact." His parents were, for example, at no time financially pinched; his home life was not lacking in the normal ration of affection and happiness; the tragedy of his life at Marlborough, the "brutality" of a certain master, with a sarcastic turn of phrase, the "monstrosity" of his grandfather—all these "facts" are in truth but one-sided and exaggerated impressions thrown out (and not to be taken too seriously) by a man prone to self-dramatisation, in a moment of depression or nervous tension. I am sure also that Dick Sheppard would have blushed at the claims made for his merits as a "cricketer of the first class," and certainly would have corrected the impression that the domestic tragedy which darkened his last years was due to no faults of omission and to no lack of patience and understanding on his side. When he had leisure for calm contemplation, when he could see things whole, he constantly revealed a most impartial sense of justice, and a grand, impersonal honesty which fought strenuously to correct false impressions and to balance one-sided pictures. It was in his *nature* to obscure the truth; but it was in his *heart* to establish truth and justice by all means and in all things. The biography of such a man should aim no lower, and with such a subject as Dick Sheppard can achieve that aim only by recognising the need for reticence and by discriminating between calm judgments and hasty or casual impressions.

A GROUP PHOTOGRAPH TAKEN AT A VALEDICTORY GATHERING FOR THE C.O. OF A SOUTHERN NAVAL AIR STATION

It is probable that many officers in the Fleet Air Arm will be interested in this picture. It was taken on the occasion of the appointment of the C.O. of the Station, Commander (A.) C. E. Eckersley-Maslin, to another post. Here are the officers who figure in the group: (seated) Surgeon-Lieut. C. E. Miller, Pay-Lieut.-Com. W. E. Hacking, Lieut.-Com. (A.) P. A. V. Dolleymore, Lieut.-Com. C. J. Cawdry, Com. (A.) C. E. Eckersley-Maslin (Commanding Officer), Pay-Com. B. D. Reed, Rev. P. R. Harvey (Chaplain), Lieut.-Com. R. D. Watkins, Major W. R. Parks; (first row) Nursing Sister K. M. Buckley, Q.A.R.N.N.S.R., Pay-Lieut. J. F. O'Leary, Lieut. (A.) P. W. Fell, Lieut. C. W. Monk, Lieut. (A.) T. A. de V. Hunt, Lieut. F. Pierce, Pay-Lieut. J. Sheehan, Lieut. C. J. Little, Third Officer L. M. Urwick, W.R.N.S.; (second row) Pay-Lieut. W. E. Sandifer, Lieut. D. C. MacLaren, Surgeon-Lieut. W. S. Johnston, Elect.-Lieut. J. E. Harpum, Surgeon-Lieut. (D.) R. L. Denny, Lieut. E. C. Soughton, Lieut. C. L. F. Webb, Lieut. W. A. J. Kerr; (back row) Warrant Air Officer H. W. J. Wolfe, Wt. Observer E. H. P. Mears, Wt. Air Officer F. H. Garland, Boatswain (P.R.T.) C. W. Mellow, Sub-Lieut. (A.) R. G. D. O'Donnell, Senior Master E. G. Murch

THE SON OF A FAMOUS FATHER: Lieut. G. D. Pound, D.S.C., R.N., is the captain of a destroyer; he is the eldest son of Admiral of the Fleet Sir Dudley Pound, the First Sea Lord. With him on the bridge is his dog, "A.B. Joe Smith," an old sailor who has been with his master ever since he was a puppy. "Joe Smith's" chief amusement on board is chewing up his master's headgear, his tally now standing at "three peaked caps destroyed"

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THE GERMAN GENERAL VON THOMA WITH MAJOR BURCKHARDT, Commander of the German Parachute troops in Egypt. Both are now prisoners in our hands

CAPTIVES FROM EGYPT:

And the Result of our Air Attack on an Aerodrome in Tunis

THREE MORE AXIS GENERALS CAPTURED IN THE WESTERN DESERT: From left to right, they are Brigadier-General Masina, Commander of the Trento Division; Major-General Brunetti; and Brigadier-General Bignani, second-in-command of the Trento Division—a picture taken just before these officers were taken away for internment. In all, eighty Italian generals are now in our hands. Major Burckhardt (in left-hand picture) worked closely with General Ritter von Thoma, the captive G.O.C. of the Afrika Korps, in Africa and other theatres of war. He was the Commander of the German Parachute troops in Egypt: he also organised and carried out the assault on Crete. He was rounded up along with thousands of other prisoners

THE ROYAL NAVY KEEPS UP THE WATER SUPPLIES FOR THE EIGHTH ARMY: Using Tank Landing Craft, the Navy is taking tens of thousands of fresh-water barrels to the advancing Eighth Army—another instance of the perfect three-Services co-operation which resulted in the desert victory

NEW ZEALANDERS CLEAR THE ROAD FOR THE ADVANCE BEYOND SOLLUM: The Escarpment road was blown up by the Germans in their hasty retreat into Cyrenaica: they estimated that it would delay the Eighth Army for three weeks. It was opened to traffic within twenty-four hours!

A MIXED BAG ON TUNIS AERODROME: Two pictures taken on November 12 following a dusk attack the previous day by Beaufighters. In the left-hand picture, five German Ju.52 troop-carriers are seen, with the burnt-out remains of an Italian S.M.81: above the wreckage is another S.M.81 with German markings. In the right-hand picture, the burnt-out aircraft is a French Leo45, to the right of which are three German Ju.52 troop-carriers: in the lower left is an Italian S.M.81: the smaller aircraft are German fighters—Me.109F's

The World of Books—By Vernon Fane

OLD ST. PETERSBURG AND MODERN WASHINGTON

When Muscovy became Russia; What America is Really Like; Washington Tittle-Tattle; Miss Sackville-West's Cautionary Tale

MR. CHRISTOPHER MARSDEN has, in PALMYRA OF THE NORTH (Faber and Faber. 16s.), written the first volume of the biography of that city, which has variously been called St. Petersburg, Petrograd and Leningrad. I say the first volume because it covers only that period from 1700, when Peter the Great decided he wanted a "window on the Baltic," to the end of the reign of Catharine II, when Charles Cameron grafted Palladian classicism on to the rococo extravagances of Rastrelli.

Peter I of Russia has been called "Great" for a variety of reasons, one of which is that he stood 6 ft. 8 ins. tall. He became the Tsar in a period when, as the result of centuries of withdrawal from Europe, his country was sunk in a slough of darkness and mediævalism. As a young man he travelled, and in Holland became obsessed with ships, shipbuilding and the sea. Later he journeyed to England, where he and his barbaric companions shocked even the none-too-delicate susceptibilities of the Court of that day.

Back in Moscow, he decided to impose a social revolution upon the hereditary Muscovite noblemen, vigorously to transplant them to the poisonous swamps and treacherous marshes of the Neva delta, and to build a capital city there. It was, they said, a murderous city; a city built on bones. "No one knows how many of those hundred and fifty thousand men, who were torn from their homes by Imperial ukase to fill in the marshland and bring Peter's whim to life on piles, succumbed to the evil exhalations of the swamps, to the disease—the dysentery—that raged, to the dangers and inhuman strain of the work; it was certainly tens of thousands. But the 'window towards Europe' was flung open and Muscovy became Russia."

Mr. Marsden gives an interesting picture of life at the Russian Court at the time when Peter took his great decision:

"Intense puritanism marched hand-in-hand with uncontrolled vice. Singing, card- or chess-playing, games and sports of all kinds—the common, harmless amusements of any people—were forbidden as inventions of the Prince of Devils; the universal drunkenness and wife-beating were accepted as a matter of course. The common people had no recreations. And apart from the cruel organised bullying of jesters—the dwarfs, imbeciles, negroes and freaks who were kept by every boyar family—heavy drinking was the only amusement of the nobility, and banquets, which always began with an edifying religious service, invariably ended as orgies. Travellers were disgusted by the drunkenness and general bestiality of the Muscovites. It was nothing to see women and children, let alone priests, reeling about in the streets and suddenly falling dead drunk. Their ordinary manners were those of savages. Their behaviour, especially towards women, on their rare appearances outside Russia, led to diplomatic remonstrances.

Peter died with his work unfinished, but it was carried on by his successor, Ann Ivanovna, subsequently by Elizabeth Petrovna, and finally by Catharine the Great.

In Russian history, the reigns of at least two of these three Empresses have become partially obscured by the powerful character of Catharine. This book, however, is Elizabeth's, and in it she stands revealed as a pleasure-loving, rather attractive character, having inherited a lot of her father's tremendous physique and zest for life. It was during her reign that some of the best architects, painters, dramatists and musicians of Europe were attracted to the Russian Court. Their mark is still abundantly to be seen in Leningrad and in Moscow to-day. How much the architectural glories of Tsarskoe Selo will have been spared by the marauding Hun of 1942 has yet to be discovered. But their history is made to live in Mr. Marsden's vigorous pages.

U.S.A.—AT WORK AND PLAY (Cassell. 6s.) is just about the bright, chatty and discursive little book that the title would lead you to expect, and a little less ambitious than the sub-title would indicate. There is a world of good intention behind the claim that this book reveals *What America is Really Like—by an American*, though perhaps the literary result falls a little below Professor Arthur Newell's contention in the foreword that, in this book Mrs. Alicia Street "has made a unique contribution to Anglo-American understanding."

In a brief compass, Mrs. Street has chosen to deal with every aspect of American life from the constitution of the Supreme Court to the habits of speech of taxi-drivers and, not unnaturally, it has left her style a little breathless, and has given a rather arbitrary flavour to some of her observations. But these shortcomings aside, it is a readable little primer for those who sincerely want to learn more about a great country, and will read it in conjunction with more authoritative works.

WASHINGTON WALTZ (Robert Hale. 12s. 6d.) is, to follow the same analogy, for an advanced course only. Miss Helen Lombard deals with personalities, scandals, rumours, tragedies and the low-down generally, on the Washington she knows so well. The author appears to fit her description as "a member of the inner circle of the diplomatic set" and, since she is an American by birth, has her feet well grounded in American custom.

Miss Lombard deals methodically with Washington protocol, passing from his Britannic Majesty's Embassy, which she reveals was known as the Maternity Home when it was first built, to the Japanese Embassy, which I regret to say that I remember as the prettiest new building in Washington.

The writer's approach has all the fragile porcelain charm of a couple of sticks of dynamite, and whatever its educative effect, this is scarcely the book for a quiet evening. Miss Lombard evidently cut her teeth on a bone of contention. Here she is on the subject of a recent British Ambassador: "No envoy, of course, can expect to buy eternal allegiance with a glass of champagne, and it's not surprising that some of England's former friends are isolationists to-day." (The book was written before Pearl Harbour.)

Miss Lombard tells her readers that the Soviet envoys have their clothes made at London's best tailor, that Yugoslav princes are too fastidious for war, that a Japanese Ambassador may be like a soldier-ecclesiastic of the Middle Ages, and that the virtues of a *père de famille* are not always suited to an Ambassador's position.

I have no way of knowing how this book was received in its native country, but I can scarcely believe that this kind of trivia will amuse or much divert people who have learned to judge policies by their execution and countries by their common men.

As a basis for what she calls a cautionary tale, Miss V. Sackville West assumes that Germany "by the use of an unspecified method of attack," has defeated Great Britain. Stretching her assumption still further, we have to believe that the United States have arrived at a peace with Japan, and have come to terms with the Nazis "to prevent a prolongation of human suffering."

GRAND CANYON (Joseph. 8s. 6d.) opens with exchanges between two English characters; the first as polished and as worldly-wise a woman as was ever played by Ellis Jeffreys, and a kind of sensitive and intelligent podge, such as might be played by Charles Laughton.

Mrs. Temple and Lester Dale are staying at an hotel on the edge of the Colorado Grand Canyon. England, as I have indicated, is *kaput*, but how they got there, or what they are living on, is unrevealed to us. Attendant upon their meditations and exchanges are a number of subsidiary characters, including a colourful Polish woman, an adolescent American co-ed girl, a blind Czech and a deaf Englishman.

The hotel manager is marked as a Nazi fifth columnist from the word go, as is the blind Czech's companion. Just as we are getting interested in a symposium of psycho-philosophy a number of bombs break the flow of ideas, the hotel goes up in smoke, the characters sweep into the symbolical and echo about the canyon.

A cautionary tale, I take it, is one that utters a warning. As I heartily object to Miss Sackville West's assumptions and just as vigorously dislike her characters, I cannot come seriously to consider her warning. It all seems as empty and as vague as the chasm which dominates her scene.

THE WIFE OF THE COMMANDER OF THE FIRST ARMY IN NORTH AFRICA: While Lieut.-General Kenneth Anderson is commanding our forces in the North African operations, his wife is working in a canteen in Cambridge. On her coat she wears the scarlet and white Crusader badge worn by the men of the First Army on their shoulders. Mrs. Anderson is tall and young-looking: she has been married for twenty-four years and has one son and one daughter. She spends several hours a day working in a Civil Defence canteen and cycles to and from it daily

Three New Plays Reviewed

By PHILIP PAGE

BEST BIB AND TUCKER.—Among the strictly minor inexplicable twists of the war is that in its earliest days we heard, and saw, much of stage economy. Plays were presented with a minimum of expense, ancient scenery or no scenery at all, and, in musical shows, strictly rationed finery (or no clothes at all). With the exception of the portion in brackets in its application to certain non-stop revues, that sentence is now the reverse of true. Now that nearly everything is be-couponed, and it is difficult for us even to buy a handkerchief or a pair of socks, certain theatrical productions have blossomed out into almost unprecedented gorgeousness. I do not grumble at this lavish display; in the case of Mr. George Black's new revue, *I'est Bib and Tucker*, at the Palladium, this splendour is guided by artistic taste. But I do wonder how it can be done. Pleasantest episode of all I found "The Jackdaw of Rheims" ballet. This is a revival from a Hippodrome revue of nearly twenty years ago, adapted from the *Ingoldsby Legends* by the late Basil Macdonald Hastings, with music by the late Herman Finck—two good and true men of the theatre. It is beautifully done, with exquisite dancing by Miss Margaret Roseby and fine singing by Mr. Joseph Farrington as the Cardinal.

The best fun is provided by those first-rate musical clowns, the Cairoli Brothers, and by a grand droll, Mr. Nat Jackley, a worthy son of his very funny father, Mr. George Jackley. Mr. Tommy Trinder contributed a lot of chatter and, as is his wont, informed us that we were "lucky people" to be listening to him.

Home and Beauty.—I cannot understand why there have been so many pontifical utterances to the effect that this farcical comedy by Somerset Maugham, revived at the Playhouse, is out of date, mainly, it seems, because it was produced just after the last war, to which it contains some references. One might as reasonably say that *The School for Scandal* is out of date because it was produced some years before the Battle of Waterloo, or *The Importance of Being Earnest* is stale and flat because Wilde wrote it just forty years after the Crimea. I do not suggest, like those two masterpieces, it is a classic, or ever likely to become one. But it is witty, provides continuous entertainment, and has a last act as furiously amusing as anything to be seen in London at present. Miss Isabel Jeans plays Miss Gladys Cooper's part with just the right touch of flamboyant poise. Mr. Barry Jones and Mr. Anthony Holles could not be better, and Mr. Kynaston Reeves's study of a pompously unscrupulous solicitor is a great asset. Mr. Ronald Squire has long been proclaimed the successor of Charles Hawtrey. The more I see of him, the more worthy he seems of the title.

Aren't Men Beasts.—This revival is hardly on the same plane. But it is a satisfying specimen of "roaring farce," with the usual accompaniments. Mr. Alfred Drayton and Mr. Robertson Hare resume the parts they created in 1936.

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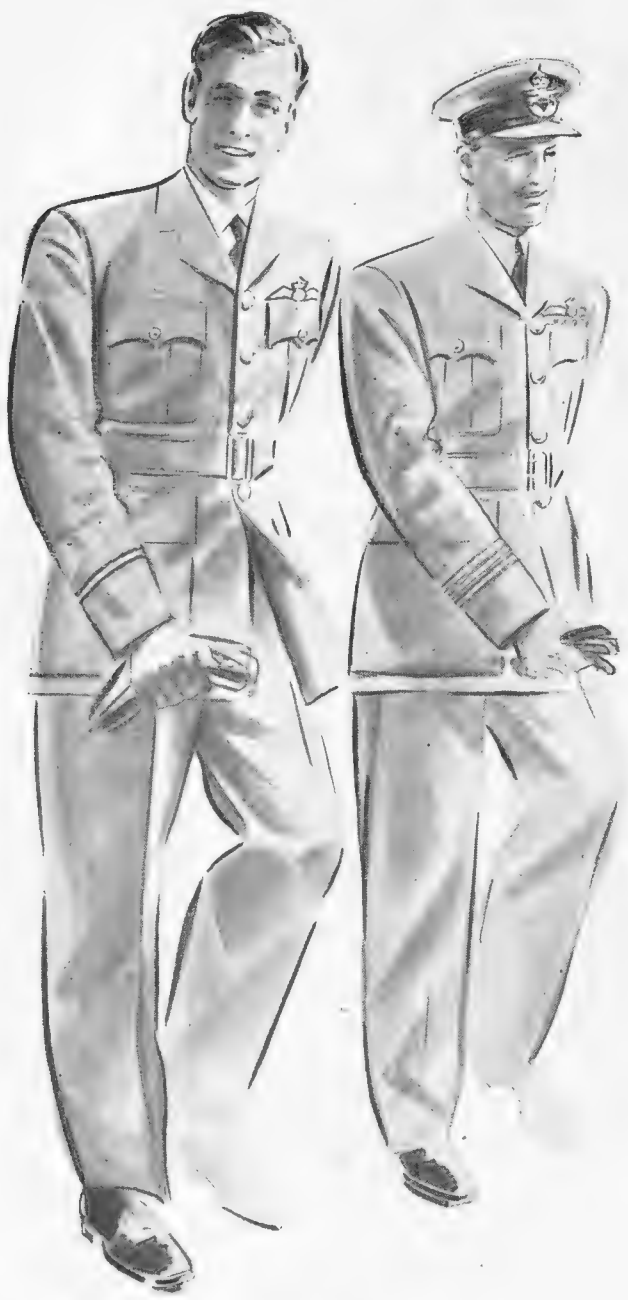

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DAILY PAPER

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NEWSPRINT

It is one of the wonders of an age of wonders that a log of timber grown on the heights of Scandinavia should within a period of eight days bear current tidings in the form of a newspaper available in the streets of Great Britain. The remotest origins of paper and its method of manufacture are veiled in mystery. The raw materials which will be employed in the future are also speculative, on account of the advance of modern science Whereas the past is somewhat legendary, the future, in the light of scientific achievement, is a matter of conjecture. Before the advent of wood pulp cotton fibre was the principal basic raw material for paper-making, and fine writing papers, in the manufacture of which Great Britain holds first place, are still produced from cotton and linen rags and waste cuttings from the textile factories. The demand for newsprint has naturally outstripped that for all other kinds of paper, and therefore the use of wood for paper-making is now far in excess of any other commodity.

In the production of sulphite or chemical pulp, including sulphate or soda pulp, the logs are chipped up into small pieces, and subjected to a very minute sorting process, which eliminates all the knots in the wood, and any pieces of damaged wood or bark, etc., which would have the effect of discolouring the finished product. These chips are boiled in a strong solution of acid calcium disulphite, which is produced from sulphur and pyrites or limestone. The chips are boiled in this chemical solution for several hours, which has the effect of eliminating the residue out of the wood, and preserving only the fibres or cellulose.

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THE growing shortage of newsprint from overseas has caused your daily paper to shrink. Compare the one you buy today with the same paper of 1940, let alone 1939. The difference in size and bulk is astonishing. The Press as well as the individual must save every scrap of paper. The fact that you are still well served with papers and magazines is a tribute to the efficiency of the newspaper industry and to the paper-makers. They have shown how with care and resource a little may be made to go a very long way. But behind their efforts stands the skill of the research chemist and the strength of the British chemical industry. The chemist has not only improved the yield of paper from such normal raw material as is still available, but has discovered highly satisfactory methods of recovering new paper from old. The greatly increased use of re-fashioned paper brings with it a host of subsidiary problems, such as the provision of suitable printing-inks, sizing material, and "loaders." These are all matters demanding skilled chemical research, often of a surprisingly intricate kind. Colour-printing sets even stiffer tasks, which the British chemical industry has solved by the production of remarkable new pigments with a wide flexibility. Shortage of tin and other metals needed for printers' type is another poser for the chemist. You can rely upon him finding a satisfactory answer to this as to the other problems inseparable from the regular appearance of your daily paper in time of War.

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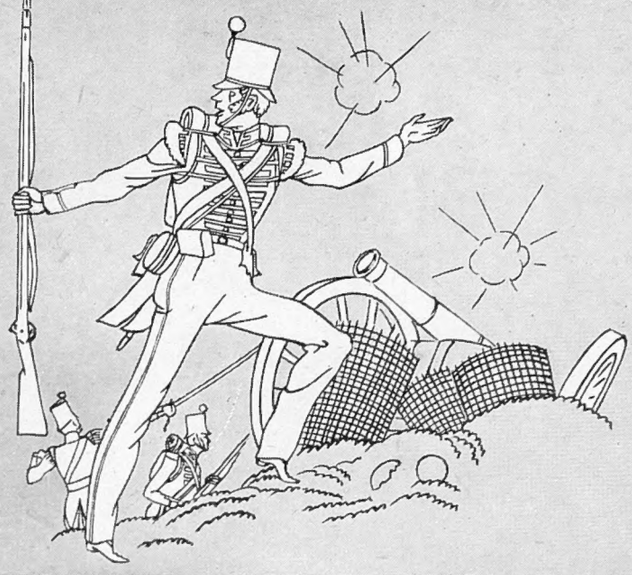
Famous QUEENS



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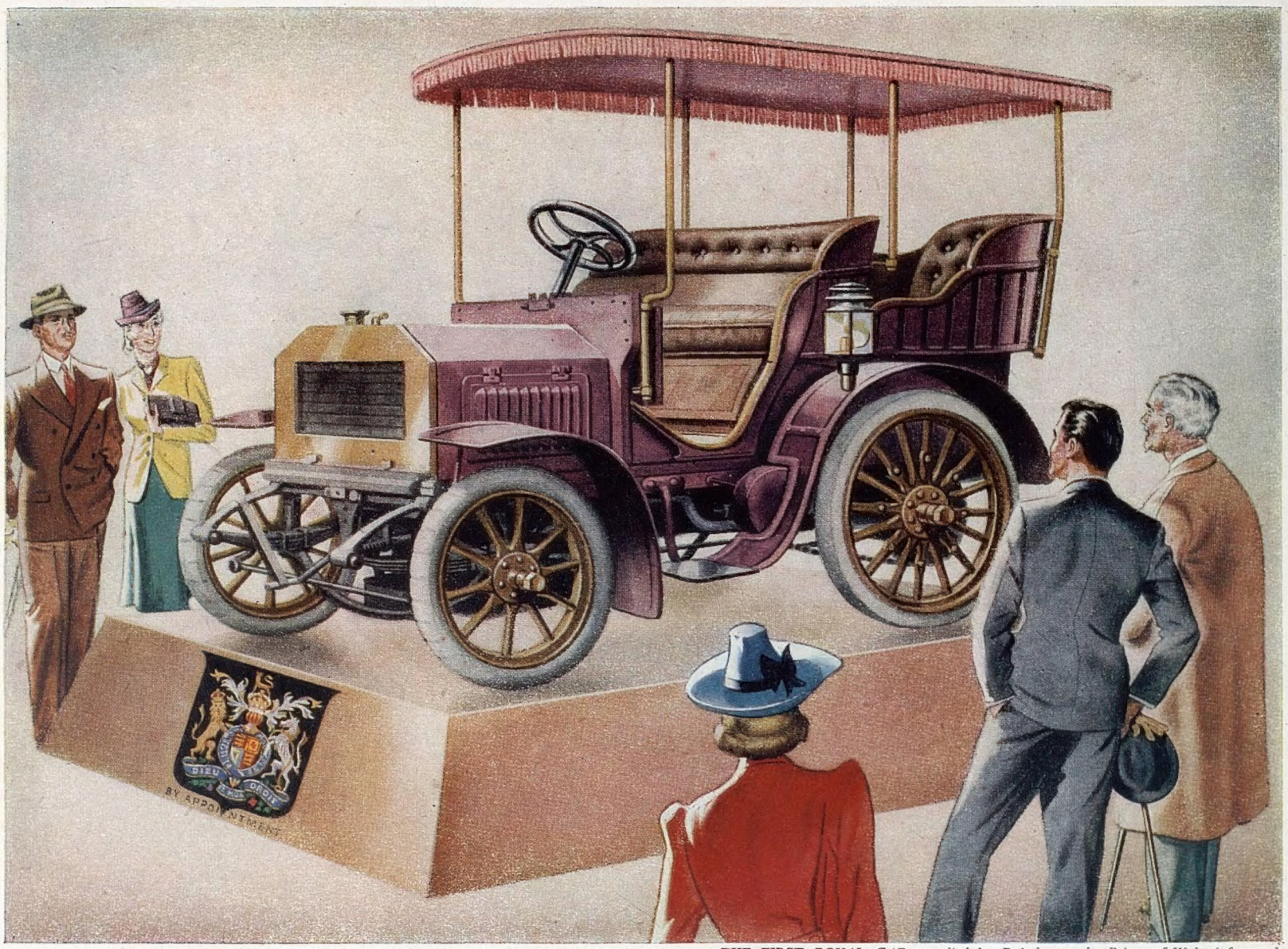
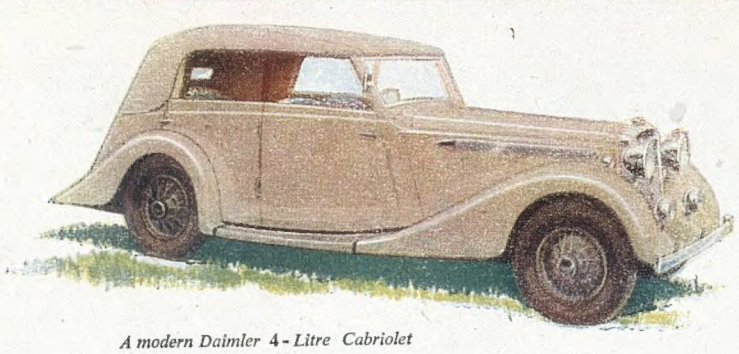


THE FIRST ROYAL CAR, supplied by Daimler to the Prince of Wales (afterwards Edward VII) in 1899, and now a valued exhibit in the Daimler collection of historic cars



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